

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. **ILLUSTRATED.**

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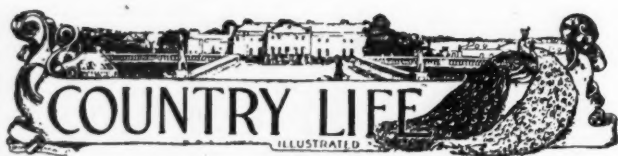
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LADY CLODAGH ANSON.

Dublin.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE HORSE-BREEDER.

THE committee that has charge of the North Wales Horse Show has done eminently the right thing in appointing Lord Dundonald as its president for 1901, and no less eminently has Lord Dundonald struck the right note in his acceptance of the committee's request that he shall take on him the presidential office. That note has the patriotic sound that the name of Dundonald itself suffices to suggest. It is patriotism, moreover, of the practical stamp, therein differing from some manifestations of patriotism that we have seen. Lord Dundonald, in short, by exhortation, and by offering a special prize, urges upon the committee of the North Wales show the wisdom of giving special encouragement to the breeding, in those rough and beautiful places of North Wales which, to the sorrow of landlords, have little more than a prairie

value, of a stamp of horse—"cob," Lord Dundonald names it—that shall be suited to the requirements of that "mounted infantry" branch of the Service which is likely to be much increased, owing to the estimate of its value which the war in South Africa forces upon us. Lord Dundonald also offered another prize, to be bestowed according to the committee's discretion; and this, too, we see has been directed to the encouragement of horse-breeding for military uses, in the form of a prize for draught horses of the stamp required for the artillery.

There will be a great national demand for horses of these two classes, and especially, perhaps, of the former class. It is a national duty to supply this demand as far as the resources of the nation are able to supply it. There is also all this wild waste land in Wales, that is well adapted to the breeding of these horses, especially those of the former class, for which there will be the greater demand. Will it not gladden the heart of the loyal Welsh landlord and farmer to feel that he is doing his country a service in supplying her with the horses that she especially wants for her wars? And will it not be a certain satisfaction to him also to reap a fairly substantial profit off land that has hitherto brought him in very little return? May we not put the motive that will be sure to appeal to him more strongly first?

Of course, in point of fact, the Welshman being human, the financial consideration is perhaps the one that will appeal to him before the patriotic; but it is a constant satisfaction to be able to think that with profit to oneself one is combining good to the Universal Plan. Too often it seems to be the other way. In the course of the war that we now hope is virtually over, it has been a grievous thing for every Briton to see the millions of money going across the sea, to Argentina and all kinds of outlandish places, for horse-flesh, for the remounts. Grievous as this has been to every right-minded son of Britain, it has been more peculiarly painful to persons situated like a Welsh landlord looking forth on a lovely country of mountain and valley, a country of beauty unsurpassed, but a country that is contributing nothing to his own nor to the general good, save a few starveling ponies. These ponies of North Wales are really not powerful enough to supply any very general demand. They are wonderful little creatures, often enough, possessed of a strength and stamina quite out of proportion with their aspect and thin frame. But they have not enough of bone and muscle for general use. What they have, however, is evidence—just the evidence we want—of the value of the stock that these Welsh mountains (for practically a deal of the ground is mountain) are capable of producing, given the right materials to work upon; and we find that these qualities are exactly the qualities that are required to make an ideal mount for the mounted infantryman, who knows not from one day to another what sort of country he may be called upon to traverse, nor what sort of accommodation he may find when a halt is called. The chances are, however, that most of the "going" will be rough, and most of the fare and lodging rough likewise. Now these conditions of "roughing" it are just those under which the qualities of the Welsh ponies would show to advantage. They are immensely hardy, and used to going far with little fare. They are invincibly sure-footed, for their habitat has been the country of the mountain goat. In a word, these beautiful, poverty-stricken places of Wales are just the very ideal places for the breeding of horses suited to the work that the mounted infantry have been called upon to do in this war, and are likely to be called upon to do again. A horse cannot be a fool or a stumbler that has its schooling in the hard conditions of a mountain life. Moreover, the famous Cardigan-shire cobs are a living example of what has been effected already in the desired direction.

No doubt it requires some very special knowledge to determine exactly the right blend to produce the stamp of powerful cob that is best fitted for this mounted infantry work; and no doubt this special knowledge is perfectly at the disposal of the committee of the North Wales Horse Show. There is therefore every reason to hope that much may come of the very practical suggestions of Lord Dundonald, and their ready appreciation and adoption by the committee. The broken country of North Wales is especially adapted for the training of horses for the work required. But it is not North Wales only that has this broken country, from which little return is now extracted. In many of the wilder parts of the country there is land in abundance that is eminently suited for the breeding of horses of this stamp, land that at present lies nearly idle. The millions that have gone to Argentina and the other places across the sea for remounts had better, far, have gone to the landlords and farmers of these wilder parts of our own islands. It is not, of course, to be hoped or expected that such an extraordinary demand will be maintained, but it is very sure that, as a result of the lessons of the war, a steady and greatly increased demand will exist for a class of horse that places like the Welsh hills are specially suited to breed; and those who own such breeding grounds, and fail to lay their account with this demand, will have but themselves to blame if they suck no advantage from it, nor do their share in the supply of the national need.



IT is a long time since there has been so sharp an interchange of blows in the metaphorical sense as that which was seen and heard in the House of Lords at the beginning of the week. In vigour of language, perhaps, the encounter between the late Duke of Argyll and Lord Carrington on the subject of the Report of the Welsh Land Commission was almost equally remarkable. Lord Carrington rose and urged upon the Upper House the duty of acting upon the report of which he was part author, and for which he with others was responsible. The Duke of Argyll bluntly described the report as "pompous claptrap." But in that case it did not much matter what anybody said, for the fate of the Report of the Welsh Land Commission had been decided long before, and Lord Carrington was flogging a dead horse which had been killed by laughter. But the debate which began on Monday was of an incalculably more serious character. Lord Wolseley was on his defence, and the tactics which he adopted consisted solely and simply of an attack upon the system upon which his position as Commander-in-Chief was regulated. Lord Lansdowne replied with "the counter-quip quarrelsome," saying in effect: "You cannot be heard to say that the power and authority given to you by the system were inadequate when you did not perform even the duties which the system imposed upon you. Moreover, there is no denying that you gave us shockingly bad advice about the South African War. In fact, all the complications are your fault." The first thing that occurs to one is that great as are the advantages of publicity, so far as the people of this country are concerned, it is distinctly to be regretted that foreign nations, including potential enemies, should be in a position to gloat over this public washing of dirty linen. For the rest, we are hardly disposed to offer an opinion on the points at issue, because, although our knowledge is quite equal to that of the average leader-writer, we are unlike him, in that we are not confident in its sufficiency.

But in the debate there is at any rate one cheering feature. It is that whatsoever may have been the relations of Lord Wolseley and Lord Lansdowne, they are happily at an end. For clearly these two peers can never have worked in harmony. Another cheering point, too, is involved in Lord Raglan's humorous speech. His work is done, it appears, in a room which lies between those of Mr. Brodrick and Lord Roberts. They are continually running to and fro to consult one another in a manner which gives poor Lord Raglan no peace. Lord Raglan, who is a very able and businesslike person, far better versed in military affairs than is known to the man in the street, and by no means without practical experience in affairs, does not of course mean to be taken seriously, but he does mean to say in a cheerful way that the relations between Mr. Brodrick and Lord Roberts are absolutely satisfactory, and that is the first essential of the success of that reorganisation and reform upon which the nation is determined to insist.

There is a great deal to do because the Rev. H. M. Burge has been appointed to the head-mastership of Winchester, and the objections which have been raised are not entirely lacking in weight. The objections are mainly these. Mr. Burge was appointed to Repton only last term. He has deserted Repton as soon as he could get something better. That, it seems to us, may be Winchester's gain, though it be Repton's loss. Mr. Burge is a clerical head-master. But we fancy his clericalism is not of an obtrusive kind, and, other things being equal, we confess to a slight prejudice in favour of clerical head-masters. It is always a pity that a head-master should not be able to exercise over his boys that influence which belongs to the preacher of sound and sensible sermons in the college chapel. For example, it is not too much to say that a great deal of the almost unparalleled influence exercised over several generations of boys by Dr. Ridding at Winchester was due to his acute, rugged, and

whimsical, but sensible and robust, sermons. He also was a clerical head-master, but by no means obtrusively clerical.

Then the *Outlook*, which appears to feel very warmly in this matter, says: "That he has moved on so soon, suggests that the governing body of Winchester cannot find one assistant-master to fulfil their requirements." As a matter of fact there are at least two assistant-masters at Winchester, probably more, who would have done very well as head-master if they did not happen to be assistant-masters already; but since at Winchester, among the general body of assistant-masters outside the head-master and the second master, none is before or after another, there would always be a certain awkwardness in selecting one for promotion to the Head. Dr. Fearon, for example, had been an assistant-master at Winchester before he became head-master. But there was an interval during which he gained new experience as head-master of Durham, and we have very little doubt that there was a tacit undertaking between him and the governing body that he should go to Durham in order to gain experience. The other objections to Mr. Burge are that his experience as a schoolmaster, gained mostly at Wellington, has been very short, and that he is not an old Wykehamist. On the other hand, it has to be observed that he was a great success at Wellington, and a great success at University College, Oxford, also—and this pleases us more than it will some others—that he is likely to be jealous for the athletic reputation of the school. In fact, we shall not quarrel with Mr. Burge unless he makes an effort to break through the Wykehamical traditions, which is not in the least likely. If he did—such is the strength of Wykehamical opinion past and present—he would soon go under and disappear.

In considering an appointment of this kind, it is always necessary to look who else might have been appointed, and really it happens that the field is not very large. There were those who said that the Hon. Canon Edward Lyttelton would migrate from Haileybury, and Winchester was full of reference to microscopical domesticities by which the Head of Haileybury is chiefly known. Said one humorous prefect: "We should have periodical inspection of tooth-brushes, and our trousers pockets would be sewn up." Another possible Head was the Warden of Bradfield, but perhaps Dr. Grey is better placed where he is than he could be elsewhere. Wykehamists prophesied grimly that if he were appointed a Greek theatre would be hewn out of "Hills"—known to the Ordnance Survey as St. Catharine's Hill—and the Wykehamical temperament is distinctly adverse to theatrical displays, which are not out of place when, as at Westminster, they belong to established traditions, or, as at Bradfield, they are valuable for the purposes of advertisement. Then Mr. Waterfield might have migrated from Cheltenham, which would have been hard on Cheltenham. It is true that Mr. Burge is migrating from Repton, but then Repton is not quite Cheltenham. Another possible man would have been Mr. Arthur Benson, but it would have been strange to see Mr. Benson moved from Eton. Far the most brilliant, of course, of living Wykehamists is Professor D. S. Margoliouth, who knows everything, but he has never been a schoolmaster, and those who know him best doubt very much whether he would be a good one.

Apropos of Winchester, and of the War Office, two things between which there would not seem to be much natural or necessary connection, sufficient attention has not yet been paid to the following letter written by the outgoing head-master, Dr. Fearon, last month to the editor of the *Hampshire Chronicle*. The matter has, it is true, been mentioned in the *Daily News*, but the *Daily News* at present is hardly the right channel through which to reach the hearts of those who are interested in the welfare of the country, as most of us understand that phrase. The letter was sent to us by an ardent Wykehamist, who is making holiday under the sunny skies of Mentone.

First, let the letter speak for itself. It is in these terms:

"Sir,—The letter from the War Office on the subject of the suggested rifle range, which appeared in your issue of February 9th, is such a melancholy and characteristic instance of those methods which have led all true patriots to despair of their country till the War Office is routed out from top to bottom, and all its waggon-loads of red tape are carted straight into the sea, that I ask your permission to recall a few plain facts. In July, 1897, as I both city and school had been left for some years without any rifle range, while the patriotic ardour of both young and old vehemently demanded some satisfaction, I made arrangements to lay out a range in an excellent position entirely at my own expense. I had come to an agreement with the occupiers of the land, who in the most handsome way were prepared to meet my wishes. Everything promised to give us an excellent range in full use by the autumn of 1897. I then applied to the War Office, simply for permission to do their work at my own expense. The War Office, after some difficulty, were so much pleased with the scheme that they said they would take it over themselves. I warned them that they would not find it so easy to carry out as I should. However, they persisted. Then ensued infinite correspondence. There were committees, and enquiries, and boards, and *re ordi ad libitum*. As the tons of red tape came reeling out I was innocent enough to suppose that it meant business, and I told my friends to possess their souls in patience. I did

not know my War Office. I know it now. At last, after three and a-half years' dawdling, comes a cold announcement that the War Office intends to do *nothing*, because, forsooth, they 'are not *bound* (sic) to help Volunteers in this school a bit more than they are bound to help them elsewhere.' What a hopeful attitude for our military authorities to take! They have killed rifle shooting in this school and neighbourhood! They have prevented a willing individual from supplying a great national need! and now they console themselves with the pitiful comfort that they are not helpful elsewhere, and there is no reason that they should be helpful here.

"I hope at least that all Wykehamists in every part of England, and all inhabitants of Winchester, will record the same vow as I have made, never to give another vote for any candidate for Parliament, on either side of politics, unless he will give an explicit pledge to support a radical reform of the War Office."

"Yours, etc."

"W. A. FEARON."

The letter compels some comment, and the first thing to be said, which will be no news to those who know Dr. Fearon, is that he is a man of enthusiastic temperament and of great liberality. Next one feels inclined to boil over with rage against the War Office. It is simply infuriating that this frigid answer should be returned to a public-spirited man who asks no favour, but is simply desirous of conferring one upon the school and the city, and in an indirect way upon the country which he loves so well. But we are confident that the matter only requires to be mentioned with proper publicity to attract the attention of patriotic members of Parliament, who will, no doubt, mention it at question time in the House of Commons. Mr. Brodrick and Lord Roberts, we are convinced, would be the last men in the world to look this kind of gift horse in the mouth.

It is naturally gratifying to us to find the *Spectator*, in a temperate and cogent article, taking up the crusade which we have preached, and shall continue to preach, against the so-called "Model Bye-laws" issued by the Local Government Board. The bye-laws are, as the *Spectator's* title puts it bluntly, stupid. They represent an ignorant attempt to enforce in village communities rules which may have some justification in the suburbs, where there are systems of drainage and of rubbish removal, but are worse than useless in country villages, where, usually, there is no drainage, save from the sink to the cesspool, where the contents of the ashpit find their way in due course to the garden or to the allotment. If these bye-laws are adhered to, they will do away with half the picturesque quality of rural England, and, far from staying the rural exodus, they will encourage it, for all the stupid provisions cost money, and it is already hard enough in all conscience to build cottages that will be even reasonably remunerative. To have the face of the country covered with barracks, or with single dwelling-houses built as plainly as barracks, seems to be the Local Government Board ideal. Let us resist it tooth and nail.

The *Ladies' Field* publishes a picture of a most remarkable apple tree of the Gooseberry Pippin or Ironsides variety, which so late as February 4th, 1901, was still bearing a heavy crop of apples. The picture is entitled "One of Nature's Vagaries," and certainly it is one of the most extraordinary cases of untimely fruitfulness that has been recorded. Concerning the fact there is no sort of doubt. There is the apple tree in the orchard of Mrs. Peel of Horse Hill, Callow End, near Worcester; there are the apples, and the trees in the background are bare and leafless. Moreover, the conductors of the *Ladies' Field*, so that no room for doubt might be left in the public mind, went to the length of sending a special correspondent to examine this extraordinary phenomenon, and the authenticity of the photograph was thereupon proved by ocular demonstration. To be frank, we are totally unable to account for this peculiar conduct on the part of the apple tree; but since the winter has been far from mild, it is fairly plain that Ironsides is a better name than Gooseberry Pippin for this very hardy variety.

Said the *Pall Mall Gazette* quite recently: "Australian papers received by yesterday's mail state that the experiment of the West Australian Government in turning domestic cats loose in the south-eastern districts of the colony, to check the invasion of rabbits from South Australia, has been a pronounced success. The felines destroyed immense numbers of the pests, and in some cases almost cleared the squatters' runs of rabbits. In preparation for the demand which is anticipated for cats for this work, breeding establishments are being started. It is believed, however, that it will be found much cheaper to import the animals." There is but one thing to be regretted here, to wit, that the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which is usually correct in its language, should have so far sacrificed itself to the conventions of the composing-room as to call cats felines for fear of saying cats too often. Oxen are not bovines; men are not humans; dogs are not canines, although their teeth are; nor are cats felines, although they are feline. But we thank the *Pall Mall Gazette* cordially for its suggestion of importation of cats into Australia, with its necessary corollary of exportation from England in general and London in particular. Breeding cats is a comparatively slow business, but there are in London enough "rake-

hell cats"—to quote Mr. Henley—or "spectral cats"—to quote Mr. Begbie—to stock a continent. These, to all appearance, own neither master nor mistress, or, worse still, their masters and mistresses will not own them.

From every point of view the opening of the net-fishing campaign on the Tweed has been more than commonly satisfactory. The Rector of Norham came down and asked a blessing on the fishing, and forthwith the nets. Men went out and had great hauls all the river over. It is satisfactory both as a sign of faith and as a sign of salmon. It is also satisfactory as indicating the good of the new blood that lately has been infused into the management of Tweed salmon fishing with the net; but above all is the satisfaction of finding fish so plentiful. They had a good netting season on the Tweed last year—better than for some years past. Also the Duke of Roxburghe had a great rod-fishing day—sixteen fish to his own rod, was it not? And now this season has begun thus brilliantly. It is good not only for the Tweed, but also as an augury for other rivers. Is it that the sitting of the Royal Commission is going to bring salmon back of their own accord to our shores, even as ringing the dentist's bell will sometimes cure the toothache? Let us hope so, at any rate.

The first signs of the spring avian migration are on us, with a great increase in the numbers of the chaffinches—the "bachelor" finch whose spouse deserts him in the winter, as wives go to the Riviera while husbands are detained by business in Town. On their first arrival these birds go about in flocks for a day or two, as if they belonged to a gregarious species, the males and females together, but the latter in great majority. It is a late spring, and we do not yet, even occasionally, hear the chiffchaff nor see the sand-martin or the wheatear that are commonly among the first comers, but their arrival cannot be delayed long. After a few days of rest in their migratory companies the chaffinches already are paired off.

Last year, it will be remembered, there was no military racquet tournament; but this year the authorities of Princes' Club have decided that it shall be held as usual—only, there will be this difference, that the holders, Colonel Spens and his partner of the gallant Shropshires, will not be at home to defend their title of champion. No regiment has done harder or more gallant work than that which holds the racquet championship of the Army. In these circumstances the winners of the tournament will become winners of the championship, without occasion to play the previous holders as heretofore. This raises the question whether the ends of justice in the decision are better met by the holders having to meet a single pair only, or whether, as in golf, it is better to let the holders go into the tournament with all the rest and strive to hammer their way through. No doubt the latter way establishes a surer claim to superiority, yet something there is to be said on the other side. Chances are better for victory when a pair has to play one rather than half-a-dozen matches. Yet the very practice of the half-dozen matches is either helpful for the final struggle or else too exhausting. Circumstances alter cases. But no doubt the best pair is selected more accurately by the exceptional conditions that will prevail in this year's tournament, than in the ordinary conditions where the holders have to meet one pair only.

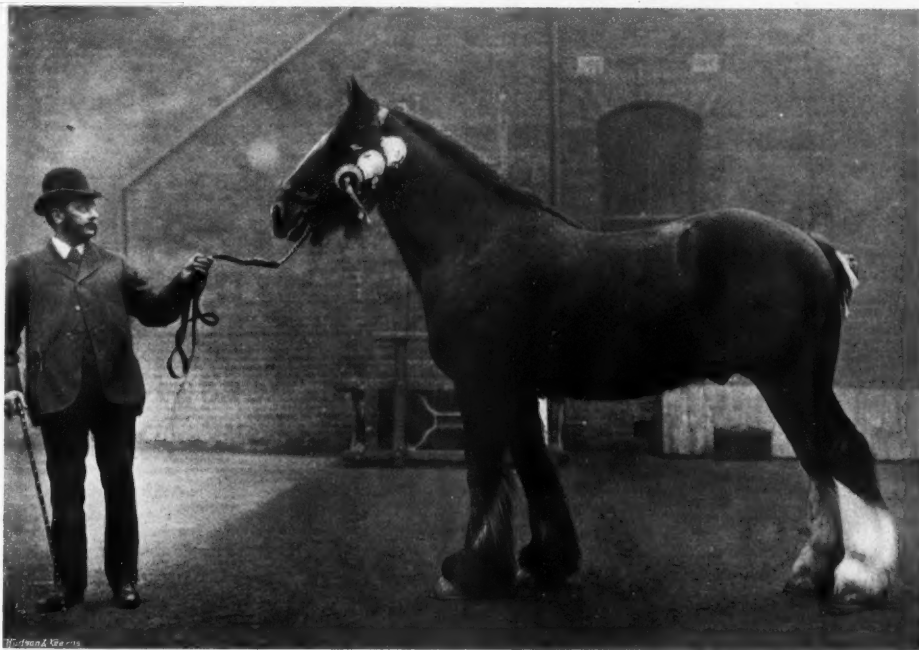
There was some little talk this winter about getting up a quartette of British figure-skaters to take part in the Swedish meeting that was held in mid-February at Stockholm. These sports are interesting as spectacles to the Briton who probably has seen nothing of the kind before. There is the "ski" jump, with which many descriptions have made us familiar, races on "skis" and skates, and figure cutting of all descriptions. But perhaps most worthy of serious notice are the endurance and speed tests on horseback. These are questions that touch us nearly, as they have so often spelt success or failure in our South African operations. Something of the kind is already in favour with our military authorities. There is reason to expect an extension along the same lines. One item of the Swedish programme was a fifty-mile road race on horseback. The leading competitors were all officers of the Swedish Army, and the winner covered the fifty miles—in a snowstorm for some part of the distance and with the thermometer nowhere, so to speak—in 2 hrs. 48 min. and odd seconds. Within the space of about 8 min. the next two completed the distance. In a driving race on "skis," held on another day of the meeting, an officer traversed the distance between Upsala and Djursholm, a distance of 45 miles, in 2½ hrs. Some tests of a like kind would teach our cavalry or mounted infantry both to know their own capacity for locomotion and to increase it; and humanitarians need have no fear that, properly conducted, they would imply cruelty to the horses. Severe exertion is not necessarily an ill for man or horse, and, after all, we have our horse-racing.

THE SHIRE HORSE SHOW.

A VERY great success has to be recorded as the result of the twenty-second show of the Shire Horse Society. In every respect it was a great advance on the best of its predecessors. The entries were more numerous and of an improved class, no horse show ever proved more attractive to visitors, and the sales were extremely satisfactory. It opened on February 26th, the judges being Mr. J. T. C. Eadie of Barrow Hall, Derby; Mr. T.

B. Freshney of South Somercotes, Louth; and Captain H. Heaton of Worsley, Manchester. The crowd that lined the arena and filled the galleries while the judges were performing their duties, attested by its numbers what a keen and widespread interest has been aroused in Shire horses.

Youth claims precedence at the show, and the first to enter the ring were the one year old colts, of which there were forty-six entries, reduced by a process of elimination to seventeen for the final struggle. The first prize went to Mr. Henderson, M.P., for Buscot Gladiator, a large, well-limbed, promising son of that



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BEARWARDCOTE BLAZE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

grand horse Buscot Harold; Captain Duncombe's Conqueror of Waresley was a good second; and Lord Middleton produced the third in Birdsall. These are all likely to make excellent Shires, but it was a frequent remark that the colts did not show up so well as the fillies. This was not the most satisfactory class in the show. In the class for two year olds there were no fewer than eighty-six entries, but it did not take the judges a long time to get rid of the impos-

sibles and bring the competitors down to the regulation twenty-five. For the first prize there was only one in it, Bearwardcote Blaze, who afterwards carried off the society's challenge cup for the best stallion in the show, an outstanding horse with the best of feet, excellent joints, good action, and plenty of feather. The two next prizes were taken respectively by the Messrs. Thompson with Desford Stylish Chief and Mr. Cross with Lockinge Forest King, for which Lord Wantage took the breeder's prize. Three year olds numbered eighty-eight, and were a magnificent lot taken



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THE JUDGING IN THE RING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

altogether, superior to the two year olds, though not containing anything quite as good as the winner in the latter class. But it was seen that the weighty three year old was little if at all inferior to the junior, who eventually beat him for the championship. Lord Llangattock followed with Hendre Champion, and Captain Duncombe took third with Bank Yung Lu. Among four year old stallions, which were not a particularly good lot, Mr. Green's Moors Regent easily came out first, followed by Messrs. Forshaw's Black Topsman and Lord Rothschild's Valesman. A very fine stallion in the shape of Capstone Harold, belonging to Messrs. Forshaw, was easily first in the class under 16h. 2in., which otherwise was not very distinguished, though a strong and correct horse was the second, Mr. Walter Johnson's Real Echo, by Blyth Echo. Mr. Henderson's Buscot Hero came third. The class corresponding to this, but over 16h. 2in., was, as might be expected when all the demand is for heavy Shires, considerably better, and brought out some of the best horses in the show, the fight for first place lying between the Messrs. Forshaw's Stroxton Tom, Mr. Rowell's Bury Premier Duke, and Lord Rothschild's Anchorite, the awards being ultimately given in this order. It is a very great compliment to Stroxton Tom that he was placed in front of two such grand horses as Bury Premier Duke—reserve for champion last year—and Anchorite, who looked very gay and fit. As showing how good the class was it is enough to mention that so good a Shire as Mr. Johnson's Lambton King was placed fourth. Stroxton Tom was ultimately placed as reserve for champion, and many were of opinion that he was every bit as good as his victor. Lord Middleton's Menestrel was easily first in the aged class. This finished the stallions, and on a review of the entire show it must be considered highly satisfactory that the country is so well supplied with sires of the first order. Many were ordered out of the ring at the very beginning that would have been dangerous competitors to anything going some ten years back, and we cannot help regarding this as the best augury for the continued improvement of the breed.

The chief increase in the total number of entries was due to the mares and fillies, and the show of yearlings was one to please all admirers of the Shire horse. After the judges had rejected about fifty per cent., it would not have been easy to imagine a finer show of fillies. The competition for first prize lay between Lord Rothschild's bay Active Girl, by Anchorite out of Saxon Girl, a filly of which we expect to hear brilliant accounts should she fulfil her promise of developing into a mare of the highest quality, and another bay, Rokeby Winifred, by Ercall Wynn, bred by Mr. George Wainwright and shown by



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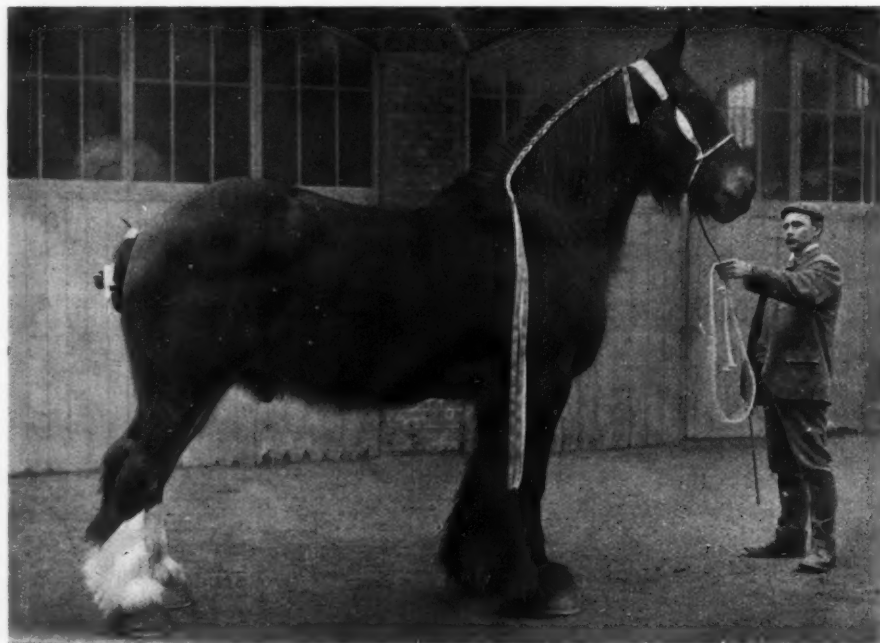
ALSTON ROSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Mr. John Parnell. She was somewhat coarser than the other, and her being placed first seemed to surprise some of the spectators. Messrs. Jones and Sons carried off the third prize. Curiously enough, in the next class, for two year olds, the battle for first place was again between Lord Rothschild, with a filly by Markeaton Royal Harold, her name Fortress, a good but somewhat undeveloped filly, and another of Ercall Wynn's progeny, Monks Polly, exhibited by Mr. Bryars and bred by Mr. George Wainwright. The latter is a heavy grey, and took first place, a third being found in Ladysmith II., a brown filly of Mr. Jackson's. Three year old fillies were a very strong class indeed, the first three being Mr. Yerburch's Lily of the Valley, Mr. Thompson's Desford Flower, and Mr. Jackson's Holker R.I., all typical mares, each of which would have headed her class against any ordinary competitors. Four year old mares formed a very good class, Lord Rothschild this time carrying off the ribbon with Worsley Princess, bred by the Earl of Ellesmere, whose stud also produced the second prize winner, shown by the Messrs. Thompson. In the class allotted to mares under 16h. high, Mr. Thompson's Woodperry Watercress came out first, followed by Mr. Jackson's Warren Hazel and Mr. Towgood's Princess Harold. The next class, devoted to mares over 16h., contained the cream of them. Lord Rothschild's Alston Rose showed improving form last year, when she carried off the challenge cup for the best Shire mare at the Rochdale Show of the Royal Lancashire Society, and nothing could have been more taking than her appearance in the ring this year. She was naturally placed first in her class, and carried off the championship

for the best mare in the show. The second, Mr. Crisp's Aurea, has had her day as champion, and was no unworthy rival of Alston Rose, a third being found in Mr. Henderson's Moors Cambria. A very good class also was that for mares 16h. 2in. or over in height, and five years old or more. First place was given to the gigantic Southgate Charm, who subsequently made a struggle for the championship. She has been reserve before, and was so again. Lord Rothschild's The Nun, by Fear None, scarcely did herself justice, as she is really as typical a Shire brood mare as there is in England, but on this occasion she had to succumb to Southgate Charm. The third was Mr. Lowndes's bay Rolleston Fuchsia. They were three very level mares, with little to choose between them. In geldings, Captain Duncombe, Mr. Appleby, and Mr. Ward took firsts respectively for three year, four year, and five year olds.

At present the flowing tide of fashion is with the Shires, and this splendid show will do much to advance their fortunes. The most solid proof of admiration was given in the sale-ring, where very satisfactory prices were obtained. But the champion stallion



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BARDON EXTRAORDINARY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

changed hands privately for 2,000 guineas, a price that should gratify the owners. It must be, even if not absolutely a record, at least more than any tenant farmer ever before obtained for a cart-horse.

OUR PORTRAIT . . . ILLUSTRATION.

THE subject of our frontispiece became Lady Clodagh Anson instead of Lady Clodagh Beresford by her marriage with the Honourable Claud Anson, son of the late Earl of Lichfield and brother of the present Earl, on Wednesday of last week. Seldom has there been a more brilliant ceremony or has Irish Society been more completely represented at St. George's, Hanover Square. All the world knows that the bride is the sister of the Marquess of Waterford, niece of Lord Charles Beresford, and grand-daughter of the Dowager-Duchess of Beaufort.



IN deference, possibly, to an expressed wish in one of the literary papers, in consonance certainly with the wishes of its best friends, the *Monthly Review* begins to take a keener interest than heretofore in literature pure and simple. That to me, who grow weary of political discussion, and more weary still of being worried to vote about once a week on issues which are a mystery and for candidates who are unknown to me, is an unmixed blessing. To begin with we have a list, headed "On the Line," of quite recent books worthy to be bought and read. One need not quarrel with the list, which includes Joseph Conrad's "Lord Jim"; "Quality Corner," by C. L. Antrabus; "Princess of Arcady," by Arthur Henry; "In Birdland with Field-glass and Camera," by Oliver Pike; the Rev. G. Goodenough's "The Handy Man Afloat and Ashore"; "In the Ranks of the C.I.V.," by Erskine Childers, and some other volumes of more serious character. But one may perhaps say that the list of the lighter books might be more complete. In the literary way we have also a highly appreciative article by Mr. R. A. Streetfield on two poets of the new century, Mr. Binyon and Mr. Stephen Phillips; a fine poem by Mr. George Meredith; and an illustrated account by Mr. Arthur J. Evans of his wonderful discoveries in Crete, which involve nothing less than the palace and the fabled labyrinth of Minos himself. There has been nothing quite so interesting and complete since the days of the excavation of Heracleum and Pompeii.

To the *Monthly Review* also Mr. J. A. Fuller-Maitland, the most discriminating of our musical critics, contributes a masterly article on Giuseppe Verdi, in which more credit for originality of conception is given to Verdi than by Mr. J. Cuthbert Hadden, who, writing on the same subject in the *Fortnightly*, makes much, perhaps even a little too much, of Wagner's influence on the veteran Italian composer. I am afraid I had hardly realised how long and how strenuously Verdi had lived, that his early triumphs belonged to Garibaldian days, when his operas used to be knocked about, so to speak, by the censor, and that his latest and greatest works were produced in his eighth decade and just after it was over. On the English critics, as Mr. Hadden observes, Verdi was slow to make his mark; but Mr. Hadden seems hardly to realise how early his gift of melody caught the populace. It was embalmed even in popular and long-forgotten verse.

"A nicer girl than Fanny Lisle
To sing a die-away duet with,
Sav something in the Verdi style,
Upon my life I never met with."

Let it also be said of the *Fortnightly* that Mr. Stephen Gwynn's specimen of mediæval Irish poetry, with version and comment, is interesting, that Mr. Baillie-Grohman has written another of his alarmist articles about rifles, and that Mr. Alfred Sutro has translated a very pretty account of bee life, being the fourth chapter in Maeterlinck's forthcoming book, "The Life of the Bee." This is really beautiful reading.

Some kind-hearted folks seem to have had all sorts of doubts whether to classify "Stray Papers by W. M. Thackeray," edited by Lewis Melville (Hutchinson), among books which ought not to have been, not written, but compiled. I have no doubt at all that when a great author deliberately consigns the fugitive productions of his youth to oblivion, and when his relatives take the same course later, no man has a moral right, under any plea, to collect those pieces. "A volume such as this is always issued, more or less openly, for the pleasure of students in literature, for the critical rather than for the general reader—or those, in fact, who may desire to trace the development of a great writer's literary genius." Exactly so; and of course nobody ever thinks twice of the money which it is proposed to make. But the true admirer of Thackeray—and I reckon myself almost a fanatic in admiration of him—is wounded by these things. It is a minor matter that some of the articles in the *Snob*, the *Courtsman*, and the *National Standard*, attributed to Thackeray, should be crude and boyish, and it is not to be denied that Mrs. Ramsbottom is distinctly funny, but it is really distressing that Mr. Melville should play the part of body-snatcher to so rude and vulgar, and even blasphemous, a set of verses as those on "N. M. Rothschild, Esq.," which appeared in the *National*

Standard of May 18th, 1833. "Not 'the king of the Jews,' but 'the Jew of the kings,'" and "a greasy-faced compound of donkey and pig," are, both of them, lines of hopeless vulgarity; but Thackeray was but twenty-two when he wrote them. Mr. Melville, I expect, is more than that.

Amongst instructive and interesting picture-books the first volume of "The Living Races of Mankind" (Hutchinson), H. N. Hutchinson, J. W. Gregory, and R. Lydekker, is distinctly to be commended. By way of saving the printer, it may be observed that all of these ethnographical and ethnological experts are F.G.S. at the least, and all of them more. Their idea is to give in a popular form, and with a view to encourage trade, a short illustrated account of the habits and pursuits and feasts and ceremonies of mankind all the world over, and they have carried it out in a very interesting fashion. To me, as a frivolous person with no intention of entering into commerce, the study of this book has been a vast entertainment. The volume deals with Polynesia, Australia, the East Indies, Asia, the Malay Peninsula, and Madagascar. Africa, Europe, and North and South America are to come in later volumes. The illustrations are all from the faithful photograph, and I confess to have failed to realise how handsome are the men and women of some of the races, especially the Polynesian, or how hideous are some of the others. The palm for ugliness must be divided between some of the Australian Aborigines, notably those who haunted the Gilbert River, and the Hairy Aino, and after looking at the portrait of one of the former, a man of the Workii tribe, one sees no reason for surprise that Mr. Hutchinson should be ready to believe that man ascended from some humbler type.

The death of Mr. F. S. Ellis, friend of Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and William Morris, editor of "The Golden Legend," and Shelley, Herrick, Cavendish's "Life of Wolsey," and Chaucer for the Kilmiscott Press, has set many a tale current of his kindness, his taste, and his learning. He was, until Quaritch came into the field, the undisputed monarch of that fascinating kingdom, the old book trade, but Quaritch, it was said, deeply resented the fact that Ellis was chosen to be official buyer to the British Museum. The *Athenæum* recounts the amusing story that whereas Quaritch often boasted that he had cost the museum over £70,000 by running up the price of books which it wanted, Ellis used to reply that he had often run up a book simply for the sake of leaving it on Quaritch's hands. In truth, bidding, without meaning to buy, is always a dangerous game in which the biter is apt to be bit. This was discovered some years ago, when Mr. Ernest Terah Hooley was prosperous, by some ingenious gentlemen who "lan him up" at a very fashionable sale of horses. The astute Hooley stopped suddenly, and they laughed, as the saying goes, on the wrong side of their mouths. He laughed best—and last.

On the same page of the *Athenæum* with this story (not the one about Hooley) is a nice little verbal point. A Mr. Claude Jenkins writes to say that he, like an *Athenæum* reviewer, is accustomed to use the words "to cavil" as meaning "to criticise or find fault with," without any necessary suggestion of unfairness or captiousness. He is, he says, surprised to find that, in the New Oxford Dictionary, "cavil" is defined exclusively as meaning "a captious, quibbling, or frivolous objection; the raising of frivolous objections," and the corresponding verb as "to object, dispute, or find fault unfairly or without good reason." Why Mr. Jenkins should be surprised it is difficult to see. Dr. Murray's definition is substantially Dr. Johnson's also, based on the use of Shakespeare, Pope, and Milton. But let Mr. Jenkins look to himself, and to his own use of words: "to criticise" is to judge, not necessarily to condemn.

The first number of "V.R.I., Her Life and Empire," which the Duke of Argyll is writing for Messrs. Harmsworth, is full of promise. The illustrations are numerous, well-executed, and to a large extent unpublished hitherto. Let no man make the mistake of thinking that this important work is being "rushed," so as to take advantage of a national sorrow. In his opening sentence of the interesting chapter dealing with her late Majesty's childhood, the Duke of Argyll says: "I write at a moment of deepest sorrow. I am told that the words that fill in these pages must tell now more than they were intended to tell of the life of the great Queen just lost to us." In other words the Duke has clearly been engaged long on a labour of love; he has also been engaged worthily.

Selections from the libraries of the late Mr. William Radford, of Rolles Park, Chigwell, the late Sir Charles Locock, and of Mr. Alexander Howell, F.R.G.S., were included in an interesting sale of books which occupied the whole of last week at Messrs. Sothby's. Some of the rarest books came under the head of "Americana," and the interest in this particular line of the book collector seems to be well kept up. A somewhat mutilated copy of Daniel Denton's "Brief Description of New York," 1670, unbound, fetched £75. Less than six months ago Lord Ashburton's perfect copy of this choice pamphlet realised £400. An extremely rare edition of the letter of Columbus to Sixtus on the discovery of America, printed at Basle in 1497, went for 14 guineas. The first translation of a classic printed in the Western world was that of Cicero's "Cato major," by Benjamin Franklin, in 1744, and the translator's copy was sold for £14. A fine copy of the "Narrative of the Colony of Georgia," in the original wrappers, realised £9.

Two sets of the twenty-eight volumes of the Badminton Library each fetched £26, and Henry Alken's "Specimens of Riding near London" went for £23. An exceptionally fine copy of La Fontaine's "Fables Choisis," 1755, realised £126, and a quaint book on navigation by a Scotch pilot, Lindsay, "Navigation du Roy Jaques," in the original vellum, printed at Paris in 1583, reached just over £35. Among other interesting books, a copy of the genuine first edition of Bradshaw's "Railway Time Tables and Assistant to Railway Travelling," 1839, realised £25. A most interesting relic of John Milton, in the shape of a black letter Geneva Bible, bearing the poet's signature on a piece of rough paper pasted in, as well as that of Elizabeth, his third wife, at the top of the title of the New Testament, fetched £225. This autograph adds another to the eight signatures chronicled by Professor Masson.

Books to order from the library:

- "A Bicycle of Cathay." Frank R. Stockton. (Harper's.)
- "That Sweet Enemy." Katharine Tynan. (Constable.)
- "The Royal Sisters." Frank Mathew. (Long.)
- "The Redemption of David Corson." C. F. Goss. (Methuen.)
- "First on the Antarctic Continent." Borchgrevink. (Newnes.)
- "A Narrow Way." Mary Findlater. (Methuen.)

LOOKER-ON.



HUNGARY, as everybody knows who has once travelled there, is a land of contrasts—contrasts that suggest the fact that one is in the borderland where European civilisation and Asiatic barbarism meet. There are other contrasts, and none perhaps greater than the wide gulf between the two classes of the population, viz., the aristocracy and the peasants, between the vast estates larger than many an English county and the patch of ground with a mud-brick hovel of the peasantry. But this has nothing to do with our theme, which is to introduce the reader to a typical bit of the few remaining *Urwälder*, forests in every way as primeval as were half a century ago the great woods of Oregon or British Columbia. The place I am asking him to visit with me is the estate of Csonok, extending, if I remember rightly, over some 70,000 acres. It is situated, as it is perhaps as well to mention, on the southern slopes of the central Carpathians, where that not very high or very wild mountain range forms the boundary between Hungary and Galicia. The greater part of this extensive area is devoted to sport, for until railways come within reasonable distances of the property the immense forest wealth must lie dormant, it being impossible to transport wood for any distance over the wretched country roads, for which Hungary is as notorious as it is famous for its horses.

Up to the main shooting lodge, which is situated at the end of a narrow, heavily wooded valley, it is possible to take rough country carts. The lodge is inhabited by Baron Schönberg, the owner, only during the last two weeks of September and the first week in October, for that is the brief period where red deer stalking is possible in the dense woods stretching for miles away, covering the hillside as closely as heather does a Scotch moor. Deep gullies, into which the sun's rays hardly ever penetrate during the six months or so that the lordly beeches of which the wood principally consists are in leaf, intersect the hills. Dotted about at various points of vantage in this great maze of woods there are some seven or eight stalking huts of the simplest construction. The host assigns to each of his guests one of

these huts, each sportsman having the exclusive run of a wide beat of ground, where he is lord supreme, and need fear no interruption. His attendants consist of a keeper or stalker and of two of the wonderfully hardy native Ruthenian "boys," who



A CARPATHIAN STAG.

fetch his food and post, etc., daily from the central lodge, and thus keep open a line of communication with the outer world. The huts are small log buildings, perhaps 10ft. by 16ft., a wooden partition dividing the interior into two spaces, one for the sportsman, the other for the attendants. A big fireplace, one comfortable deck chair, a table, a lamp, and a "downy," consisting of a mattress stuffed with fresh hay and some blankets, are the furniture, and yet snugger places than these tiny huts, dropped down in the middle of glorious woods miles and miles away from the nearest habitation, no sportsman's heart could desire, and the fortnight one passes in solitude such as it would probably be difficult to find elsewhere in Europe, passes only too quickly.

The sport itself, owing to the nature of one's surroundings, is as different as possible from the Scotch stalker's experiences. The latter sees his game from the start; the Carpathian stalker only hears it, for his sole guide is the roar of the rutting male. The hours are also somewhat different from the luxuriously late ones we know. In the Carpathians you have to be up at 3.30 a.m., so as to be on the ground at dawn, for the stags usually roar during the night and stop soon after full daylight has set in. Remaining on the ground up to nine or half-past, one reaches one's hut half-an-hour or so later, to enjoy a nap till luncheon-time. After a cigar or two, and a glance at letters and papers which have reached you in the luncheon-basket from the central lodge, you leave again at four o'clock or so, remaining out till long after dark, for most shots are obtained at dawn and at dusk. Locating the stag by the roar as best you can, you approach as silently as possible,



THE SPOILS OF THE CHASE.

putting felt boots over the ordinary footgear or wearing lawn tennis shoes. In nine cases out of ten you get to within 30yds. or 40yds. of your prey without catching a glimpse of it, and I have been many times within 10yds. of a lordly master stag, crouching behind a tree and shaking with excitement for five or ten long minutes, and yet not able to see more than an occasional patch of red-brown colour through the dense foliage of the undergrowth, or the tips of the antlers above the bushes. At such a "patch" it is, of course, impossible to shoot, for in the first place it might be one of the hinds with which the large stags are always surrounded during the rut, and in the second place, owing to the immense vitality of these huge deer, one must be sure of one's shot or not shoot at all. This one learns soon by bitter experience, for if the shot is not a fatal one and the stag goes off, following up is not only immensely difficult work, but it disturbs one's whole beat, more particularly if a bloodhound is set on his tracks. The best stag I ever had a chance of killing in Csonok was a case in point. I shot him as he stood facing me, and my Mauser bullet—not one of your "gentlemanly" military bullets, but a soft-nosed Dum-dum-like missile, inflicting a wound from which few beasts manage to rally—hit him full in the chest, and, ranging backwards, probably came out at his side. He fell to the crack like a pole-axed ox, but before I could get up to him he was up and off. Blood flowed in great masses, and I thought every minute would bring me up to him. By thus making too sure of my prey, I neglected that good old rule of never following a wounded beast at once, but only after an hour or two, in which interval he will lie down and get so stiff that he cannot rise. I never got that stag, though a bloodhound and a number of natives and I followed his track for three days. My whole beat was thoroughly disturbed, I missed the best three days of the season, and when on the fourth day I gave up that vexatious stern chase, heavy rains having obliterated the wounded beast's tracks, I returned to my hut a wiser but thoroughly "disgruntled" man.

Big stags in this part of the world are about twice the weight of good Scotch stags, for 40st. clean weight is nothing unusual. In most cases it is entirely impossible to get the dead beast down to the central lodge whole, and at best it can only be done by using a sort of sleigh on runners with oxen to drag it. In most cases the beast is cut up where it fell, and ten or a dozen natives pack the dismembered parts down on their backs. On one occasion a whole stag, shot by my host, was got down to the big lodge where I happened to be, and my Kodak had a chance of immortalising the event, a fine bear and a boar, which another guest had slain a day or two before, being unfortunately already skinned, or they would have been placed alongside. The stag was a comparatively small one, scaling but 35st., and his head was only a royal, and not one of those glorious 16-pointers or 18-pointers which are occasionally obtained at Csonok.

There was an amusing feature about this stag, viz., the rapidity with which the natives cut up the beast and carried off the various parts, the kindly master presenting the whole beast (except, of course, the antlers) to the sturdy natives, who carried down the entire stag without the assistance of the usual span of oxen.

The first photograph shows the carriers standing round the royal; the second, taken less than ten minutes afterwards,



MUSTER STAG IN THE ACT OF "ROARING."

(From a photograph by F. Grainer.)

represents four of them carrying off their well-earned spoils, the dachshund casting a regretful glance at the spot where a few minutes before a very promising bit of butchering had been enacted. The leading man of the four has slung over his shoulders two quarters of the stag, weighing considerably over a hundredweight and a-half, but we see by his upright pose how little he feels a burden under which an ordinary mortal would walk doubled up. The hardiness of these men is simply surprising—in fact, they are in many respects more like red Indians of North America than Europeans.

The number of stags shot in these Carpathian wildernesses is, in comparison to the area of ground, very small indeed, for not only are they hard to get at, but their number is kept down by wild beasts, bears and wolves, particularly the latter, being deadly foes to the young. To kill five or six is a very good bag, and few sportsmen can hope to have the good luck of my friend Mr. E. N. Buxton, who killed six stags, with heads aggregating seventy tines, in the ten days of his very first attempt to stalk stags during the rut on a famous Galician

estate on the northern slopes of the Carpathians. There, in consequence of a rougher climate, the woods are pine and fir, but otherwise the incidents seem to have been very like those I have described; indeed, as Buxton puts it in his excellent chapter in one of his books, it is "timber creeping." He returned as enthusiastic with the sport he had enjoyed as every good sportsman will who has the chance of having a crack at these giant deer. Two extremely fine heads, obtained on this very estate, were recently reproduced in the columns of the *Field*, and their dimensions were those of more than average wapiti antlers. In neighbouring Transylvania the largest chamois that exist share the mountain wilds with these big stags, and, what adds an additional charm, bears are frequently shot. I know at the present moment of an estate of over 70,000 acres of which a lease for five years is to be had at the low rental of about £600 per annum. A bag of twenty



PRESENTING THE TWIG.

bears in the season is guaranteed, no less than thirty-four having been killed there last year. As there are two railway stations on the property, it is fairly accessible within three days from London.

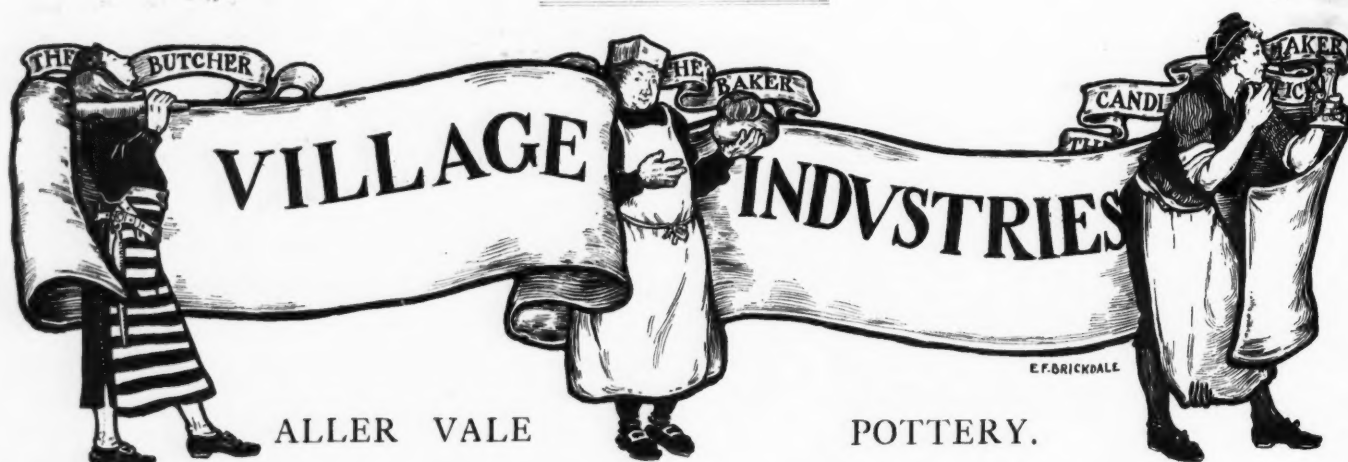
The third picture is an interesting one, because it is probably the first ever taken of a STAG IN THE ACT OF ROARING. The sound has attracted a younger stag, who is just visible in the dark background, and is evidently watching for a favourable opportunity to play the gallant. The big stag is a cross between the wapiti and the red deer (third generation). This fact the build of the antlers, with the long trez tine, indicates at the first glance.

The last picture is representative of a Tyrolean, or rather Styrian, scene, such as one sees so frequently at higher altitudes close to the timber line, with alp-huts dotting the green slopes far below one. The picture brings before us in a life-like manner a very ancient hunting custom, which we might term "PRESENTING THE TWIG." When a stag or chamois buck has been killed, the keeper breaks from the nearest fir or larch tree a small twig, which he passes over the bullet-hole in the body of the animal. He then lays the slightly-bloodstained twig on his hat, using the latter as a sort of salver, and presents the twig to the successful sportsman, who may wear it in his hat for the rest of the

day. The bearded keeper is in this instance rather a famous personage, for he is the celebrated Fertl, who accompanied his master, the renowned sportsman and explorer of the North Pole, Count Wilczek, to those far-off regions on the occasion of the Wilczek expedition to Franz Josef's Land, a quarter of a century or so ago.

Many an autumn evening, after a long day in pursuit of stags, sitting in front of a flickering fire in some remote stalking-hut, or yet more primitive alp-hut, have I passed listening to Fertl's tales of his adventures, told with the inimitable naïveté of a simple-minded child of the mountains who had never strayed beyond the little alpine village where he had been born. Subsequently our hero became a yet greater traveller, for he accompanied his master and the late Crown Prince of Austria on various other hunting expeditions to foreign lands. Good old Fertl, grey and bent, has remained unspoilt, and one likes to listen to his adventures among the Esquimaux, or with the Spanish dons while hunting the izard in the Sierra Madre, or in the late King of Italy's famous Piedmont bouquetin preserve while attending to his master, when, as King Victor Emanuel's guest, he killed this rarest of all game.

W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN.



TWO miles from Newton Abbot and four from Torquay, in a valley bounded on the one side by Dartmoor, and on the other by Tor Bay, stand the works where the Aller Vale pottery is manufactured. They are founded on the ruins of older buildings, where drain-pipes, flower-pots, etc., were once made.

Their development forms an interesting story. Night schools, which subsequently have been taken over by the Devon County Council, were started in the three villages of Abbotskerswell, Kingskerswell, and Coffinswell. Amongst other subjects, freehand drawing, modelling, and wood-carving were taught. As the boys learnt to draw they were brought to the potteries and instructed in the branches for which they showed most aptitude. At first, terra-cotta ware was produced, but taste has changed, and for this there is now practically no demand. Accordingly the manufacture was begun of the ware which is now so widely known. An Italian designer was employed, who had come over to England for the Italian Exhibition in London, and the boys from the various night schools were taken under his direct charge. One of these boys happened to invent with his brush a design consisting of stars and tadpoles, which is still used on the Abbotskerswell mottoed ware, the mottoes being on one side and the decoration on the other. This is a characteristic feature of one kind of pottery made at Aller Vale. Amongst the mottoes will be found Devonshire sayings, one of which runs:

"Du summatt,
Du good ef you ken.
Du summatt."

On another vase may be seen the quotation from Kingsley:

"Do the work that's nearest,
Though it's dull at times,
Helping, when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles."

Many Scotch quotations are also used and affixed to porridge bowls, teapots, etc., Burns's grace being a great favourite:

"Some hae meat that canna eat,
And some would eat that want it,
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
Sae let the Lord be thankit."

The inside of the bowl reminding us that—

"There's mair in the kitchen."

The Duchess of Argyll showed great interest in this pottery when opening an arts and crafts exhibition at Torquay, and has become a patroness. When Marchioness of Lorne, she made several useful suggestions from time to time, and sent the following inscription for a loving cup:

"Come fill me full with
liquor sweet,
For that is good when
friends do meet,
But pray take care don't
let me fall,
Lest you lose your liquor
jug and all."

In regard to Royalty, it may be mentioned that Queen Alexandra has also given kindly encouragement, and at her request one kind of ware is known as Sandringham. During a recent visit to Devonshire of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, a special order was sent to the pottery, with the execution of which they afterwards expressed themselves much pleased.

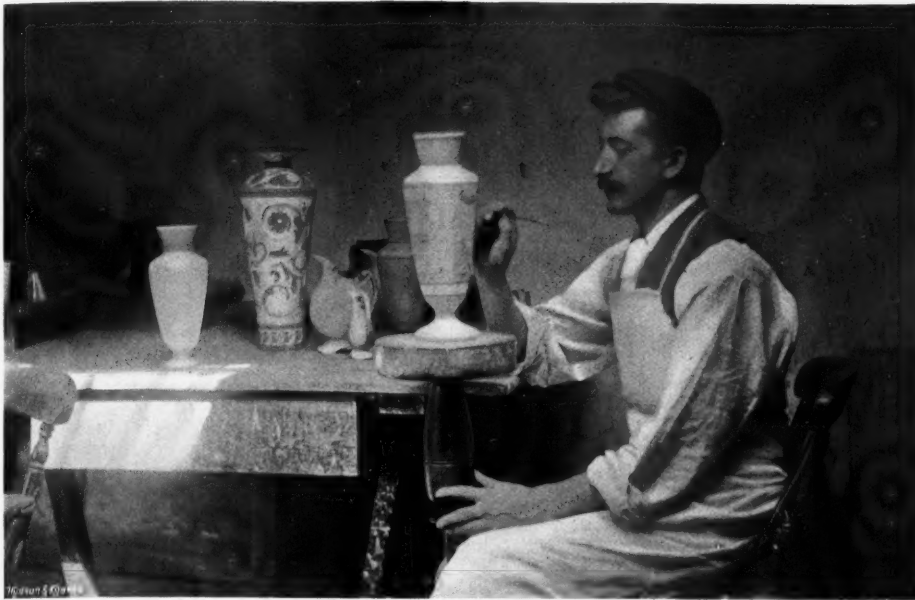
Many visitors come out from Torquay to Aller Vale, where they are shown every attention. Extensive deposits of clay are available close at hand, and at the entrance may be seen a large



A. Kelly.

TURNING POTTERY IN LATHE.

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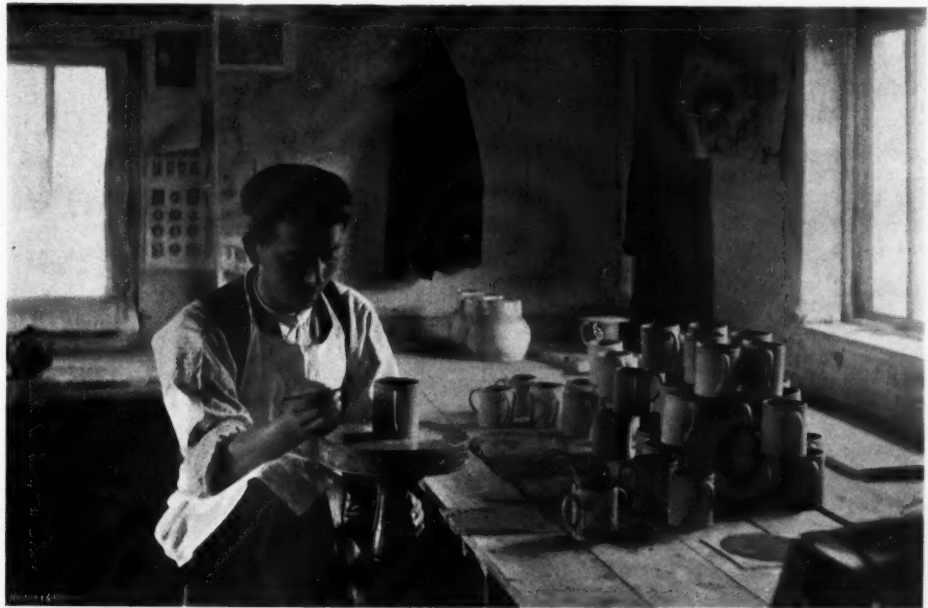
A. Kelly.

DECORATING VASES.

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drum with spikes, made to revolve by means of a water-wheel, which churns the clay while a small stream flows over it. As the gravel is heavier it sinks to the bottom, but the clay dissolves into the water and is carried off into settling pits, from which it is dipped out, put into drying flues, and thus reduced to a more solid state. The interest for the visitors is enhanced by the fact that, though three water-wheels are in operation, all the rest of the work is done by manual labour, no engine of any kind being employed. Passing within the works, the various stages of manufacture may be examined, and it is generally found that the work of the throwers is watched with the closest attention. Taking a solid lump of clay, they make it into all manner of beautiful shapes, reminding us of the words, "clay in the hands of the potter." The principle is as follows: The clay is placed in the centre of a metal disc, made to revolve by ropes connected with a large wooden wheel worked by a boy. Then by means of the manipulations of the thrower's hands, assisted by the revolutions of the wheel, the clay rises into countless shapes and sizes, from children's toys to vases standing 24in. in height, even these being fashioned from a single lump of clay. A competent thrower is able to turn out as many as ninety-six dozen children's toys in a day, or perhaps two

treated with the same consideration by rivals. When I visited the works the war fever was at its height, and the walls in the



A. Kelly.

MUGS TO BE DECORATED.

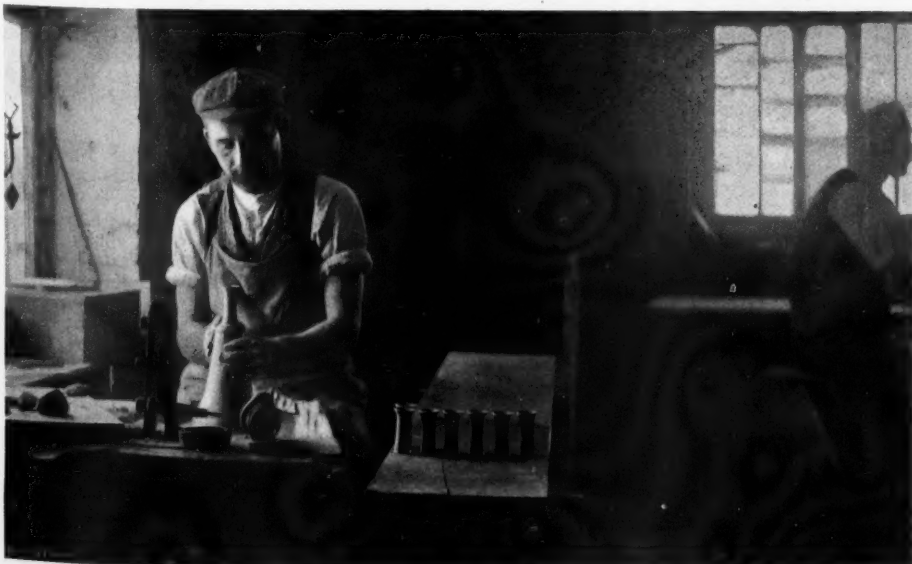
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decorators' room were adorned with pictures of General Roberts, General Buller, and other popular favourites. On a three-handed loving-cup was a picture of Baden-Powell, with his signature and the well-known scouting motto—the reverse of the black warrior's song:

"If we go forward, we die,
If we go backward, we die,
Better go backward and die."

The pottery that cannot be made on the wheel is cast in moulds, and for this modellers are required, who use plaster of Paris for this purpose. One of these men was modelling a cow from a lump of clay, soon to be distorted into a grotesque shape. For a daintily-modelled cow there would be, strange to say, practically a very limited sale, but for grotesque cows, cats with necks of abnormal length, and pigs with mouths monstrous as that of an ogre, there is a tremendous demand, which cannot be supplied with sufficient celerity.

After the pieces of ware leave the decorators they are placed in oval clay boxes, known by the potters as "saggars." They are then piled in layers in the kiln to the height of



A. Kelly.

A THROWER AT WORK.

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20ft., for the kiln will hold as many as a thousand "saggars." Here they stay in full fire for twenty-four hours, this being known to the trade as the "biscuit stage." The pottery is afterwards dipped into different coloured glazes, and Aller Vale boasts of possessing some extremely good colours, which cannot well be surpassed. The pottery is then placed in the box-ovens, which are quite distinct from the biscuit-ovens, as the flames are excluded in the latter case and the heat allowed only to soak through the tiles, because the colours are so susceptible to changes produced by the sulphur which is more or less present in all coal. In this oven the colour of the glaze entirely changes; the ware, for example, which is pink before the second fire comes out a clear transparent colour, bringing into greater prominence the beautiful tones of the decoration. In regard to the different varieties of ware here manufactured, the mottoed has already been mentioned, a yellow ground with brown inside made of brown clay dipped into liquid white clay, technically known as "white slip," the motto being cut through on to the red, after the manner of the Italian sgraffito work, with a horse-shoe nail. The yellow tone is obtained by dipping into transparent glaze after the first firing. Another variety is known as Normandy, distinguished by bright green glaze flowing into an ivory base in irregular streaks. There is also the polychrome, consisting of coloured Renaissance patterns on ivory ground, the same colour being also used on a bright green ground. I noticed many extremely tasteful candlesticks of this design.

Over sixty men and boys are employed at the potteries, the whole forming a most valuable industry, situated as it is in the midst of an agricultural district where farm work is the only alternative. The visitor will be struck by the respectable appearance of the workmen, and their civility in explaining the different branches of their craft. Such an industry is also a matter of national importance. Large quantities of children's toys were formerly sent over to this country from Germany, but they can now be produced at Aller Vale even more cheaply than by the Germans. The ware is exported all over the world, to Australia, Canada, the United States, and Germany. Just before the outbreak of the war an order was received from Johannesburg. The fame of Italian pottery is world-wide, but enquiries concerning the different varieties of this ware have lately been received from Italy.



A. Kelly.

THROWING A LARGE VASE.

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so much so that early frosts interfere with its flowers. The whole plant is graceful, the leaves finely cut, and the flowers of delicate colouring, varying from white through soft rose shades to purple. Sow the seeds in early spring as recommended for tender annuals generally, *i.e.*, in pots of light soil, or in shallow pans. The seedlings should be pricked out into small pots, and thence into the open ground when fear of frost is over. Well harden them off before planting out. The Cosmos enjoys a warm soil and sunny position, as one may judge from its native country, Mexico. It grows at out 3ft. high, and its single Dahlia flowers measure, when fully expanded, about 3in. across. It is a simple matter to sow seeds outdoors in April to maintain a succession of flowers, but as the plant blooms so late this is risky, except in, perhaps, quite the South of England.

Aster sinensis.—This beautiful annual is described in a special paragraph.

Sunflower Primrose Dame.—The annual Sunflowers are sufficiently familiar to render description needless; but there is one variety little known in gardens, a variety of much use in grouping either in the border or in a rough place; its name is Primrose Dame. The plant is not aggressively robust, but keeps to its place and grows about 4ft. high, a sturdy stem supporting a medium-sized flower of very charming colouring, the florets primrose yellow, and the centre, or disc, almost jet black. This association of centre and floret is very rich. Seed sown in the open ground in the usual way required of annual Sunflowers is almost the only "culture" necessary.

Lavatera trimestris.—This is one of the most beautiful of all annuals. It is strange that so fine a plant should be so little known in English gardens, and there are many ways of using it—in the rougher parts, in the border, or even in a bed by itself, not exactly in a conspicuous position in the pleasure grounds, but on the outskirts. We well remember a beautiful effect produced by sowing the seed in a corner of an old apple orchard. The seedlings sprang up freely, were thinned out well, and the plants grew vigorously. It grows between 3ft. and 6ft. high, with heart-shaped leaves, and its flowers are about 3in. across, are produced in early July, and appear in succession until quite the autumn. Its rose colouring is pure and refreshing; no taint of purple or lilac, but a good clear colour, relieved only by a veining of deeper shade and a purplish blotch at the base of the petals. The white-flowered variety *alba* is as true and pure as the rose colouring of the type. Sow the seed either in gentle warmth in March, or in late April in the open ground. The latter plan is advisable, as the trouble of sowing under glass is saved. Remember that, as this annual is of strong growth, severe thinning is needful. Two feet apart is not too much to leave the plants.

Nicotiana.—This is the Tobacco, and a family of great use in the flower garden. The Tobacco of commerce is *N. Tabacum*, a tall big-leaved annual much used in the sub-tropical garden, as also a nearly allied form, 6ft. to 8ft. high, known as *N. macrophyllum*. But for small and large gardens, two kinds are of conspicuous merit, one the well-known night-scented tobacco *N. affinis*, and the other *N. sylvestris*. The former of the two is almost too well known to need description, and so easily raised from seed sown in heat at this time, that we may regard it almost as a "weed." In warm soils it will even sow itself, and although a native of tropical America, will survive and spring up again in the following year. Several clumps in the writer's garden last year were produced in this way. *N. affinis* will probably suffer, however, partial extinction through the introduction of *N. sylvestris*, which is a splendid annual for grouping. A bed upon the lawn may be well filled with nothing else. Unlike the flowers of *N. affinis*, those of *N. sylvestris* do not droop under the hot summer sun, and exhale the same penetrating nutty perfume. They are tubular, pure white, and produced in clusters well above the ample light green leafage. The treatment is the same as that required for *N. affinis*.

Phlox Drummondii.—No annual is more useful for filling flower-beds than this, and the flowers are bright and varied in colour, and represent many varieties. It is half-hardy, therefore must be sown in the usual way, *viz.*, at this season under glass, pinching the shoots when about 4in. long to promote a sturdy spreading growth, and planting out at the end of May into the places they are to adorn. The soil must be rich. Where no convenience exists for raising the plants under glass, sow the seed in early May where the seedlings are to remain, and thin out to quite 6in. apart. Pinch out the tops of the shoots. The varieties are numerous, but choose clear definite colours, with small centres, and remember the cuspidata group. This consists of pretty starry flowers, white and scarlet generally, and strangely picturesque, but less effective for massing than the ordinary forms of *Phlox Drummondii*.



A. Kelly.

THE OVEN DOOR.

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IN THE GARDEN.

A FEW ANNUAL FLOWERS FOR GROUPING.

AS this is the season of the year for sowing annual flowers, the following notes may be useful. The cultivation of annuals generally was considered recently in COUNTRY LIFE.

Cosmos bipinnatus.—Few annuals are more graceful and delicate than the Cosmos, but, unfortunately, it does not bloom until quite late in the summer,

Sweet Pea.—This famous annual was fully dealt with recently.

Salpiglossis.—A beautiful Chilian annual, growing about 3ft. high, and full of grace, the flowers varying much in colour. A good seed selection gives many charming shades, even rich browns. A small bed of this is safe to create interest, because of the natural gracefulness of the plants. The same cultural direction given for the Phlox applies to the *Salpiglossis*. Let the soil be rich, the situation warm, and merely sprinkle the seeds, as they are very minute. Thin out the seedlings to quite 8in. apart. No annual flower displays so many rich and beautiful colours.

St. cels.—These will shortly form the subject of a separate article.

Verbenas.—We rejoice in the restoration of the *Verberna* to popular favour. The seed can be purchased from any good seed firm in separate colour, and, of course, in mixtures, but the former reproduce faithfully the characteristics of the parent. Seedling plants make very beautiful beds, especially when the various colours are carefully associated, but one variety in a bed is even more pleasurable. Sow the seed in gentle warmth, such as that provided by a hot-bed, in March, prick out the seedlings when large enough into small pots, thence, when these pots have become full enough, into larger ones, and then into the open ground about the end of May. Peg the stems down, as this promotes strong shoots from the axils of the leaves. A very beautiful variety of rose and white colouring is named Miss Ellen Willmott.

THE CHINA ASTER—A FINE BEDDING ANNUAL.

This note does not mean the squat pigmy flowers familiar to us under the name of China Aster, which, by the by, has nothing whatever to do with the Starwort (Michaelmas Daisy), or perennial Aster of the autumn months. The China Aster is an annual, represented by varieties of many colours and forms, but none is more beautiful and effective than the type, *i.e.*, the original Aster, or *Callistephus sinensis*, whence the squat varieties have emanated. This is a bold flower, warm purple in colouring, and held on a strong stem, almost 1ft. in length. It is a flower to mass into one bed or to plant in the reserve border to cut from, and it is not too much to hope that raisers of new things will give us flowers in form and habit like the present purple. We have just received a note of commendation about this typical Aster *sinensis*, in which the writer urges the raising of new and varied forms. We want first a good white single flower like the purple species. The many varieties already to hand show how willingly the plant breaks into varied forms. But we want to retain the handsome bush size and shape, and the strong wholesome constitution, which is shown not only by the length of time the whole plant remains in beauty, but by the long life of the cut blooms. As this is the time to raise China Asters from seed, sowing under glass in the usual way for half-hardy annuals, this note is opportune. Aster *sinensis*—and it is important to ask for the correct flower, otherwise an ordinary purple China Aster will be given—is a flower for all gardens.



CHAPTER III. KARADAC.

"YOU!"

A little word, but unmeasured in its meaning. It carried the old cold dislike churned with an awful scorn and loathing.

Gundred felt the flame of it scorch her from head to foot.

She made no appeal; the wrong done was past appeal. Only long after did Karadac recall her heart-stricken face, and vainly grieve for its despair. She turned from him, trembling, and groping for the door, and so passed out into the darkness with her dumb sorrow. But a step or two without she stumbled, and fell swooning across the threshold of the tent.

She was gone! For the instant he breathed relief.

Then the full knowledge of himself, not the self who but that morning lay tranced in happy dreams, but the strange self which stood before the gaze of all the world, came on him, a self he wotted nothing of, Gundred's husband, babbling in public of his Algitha, the mock of fools! Deceived, dishonoured, shamed for evermore!

He fell as a man falls from a great height into some deadly depth of water unawares, the chill rush roaring in his ears, his mind agasp for breath in tumbling chaos. Two thoughts he snatched at. Gundred at length had spoken truth, her voice a warrant not to be denied. Even now the memory of those tones thrilled through him. And Goyault—how had they worked their falsehoods to this issue? What part played Algitha in that cruel jugglery?

The Count wrenched himself free from all the tangle of his suffering, and turned to anger with a sense of easement. Time enough to think out the woven meshes of deceit and guilt when Gros-Nez was his own. So he strode forth to view the Castle, bringing the force of his dark genius to bear upon the siege. But close to the falling folds of his pavilion a dark figure lay across his path, and one with a lantern bending over it. Gundred as a dead woman, without sense or life, and Tonestain by her. Karadac drew back a pace. These two had been together with him in his blindness—suspicion rose to sheer repulsion in his throat.

"Who is this lady, Sieur de Grouville?" The Count's voice was harder than its wont.

Then Tonestain understood that all was told and known.

"The Lady Gundred is your wife, my lord Count."

"Yet only now have you called her by that name, Tonestain. How is it that you have tricked my ear through all these weeks?"

Tonestain drew himself upright. His dignity of mien was unabated even under Karadac's accusing frown.

"All—all that has been was for your health's sake, lord Count. If wrong was done you, 'twas to save your life."

"Then would God that I had died!" It was the only bitter cry man ever heard on Karadac's lips. Henceforth he bore himself in silent coldness.

But the words passed through Gundred's wakening senses to her heart.

"Hear me, Lord Karadac," began Tonestain.

"Nay, no need; I have heard all," the Count said. "Take my lady to some place of safety and good shelter; send for her women, and see that she has all tendence and observation fitting her estate. You, Sieur de Grouville, doubtless know her wishes; see that all be done as she desires."

"I have important tidings for your ears, seigneur."

"There is no urgency that may not wait my lady's pleasure. Go, and return."

The morning broke with blustering winds and rain, and birds came crying over from the storm-tossed sea, but wheeled away at sight of men who moved upon the lonely down. For war and morning came together. The smitten ring of bowstrings, the hissing of the heavy bolts that, sweeping high above the battlements, fell on those within; the hoarse voice of the besiegers, the answering shouts from Goyault's men; the crash of falling stones; the dull, wet wink of arms when a gleam of sunlight shot athwart a torn wrack of cloud.

The besiegers harassed the Castle, yet none pressed home the fight, though there were wounds, and blood upon the grass, and dying men, until at noon the great assault was made.

Goyault, in the stinging joy of battle, moved amongst his men, glad as he had not been for many days. He was well assured that they could keep the foe wearing out his heart under their grey walls until some happy chance of escape by sea should offer.

But he had not seen a little band, with Tonestain heading it, creep from the camp after the dawn and wind away to hide itself among the mossy scoops and rifts that rib the cliffs to southward.

How Goyault had carried off his wife and how won into the Castle before the mounted knights and men led by the Count in swift pursuit had reached Gros-Nez, none could guess though all had wondered, and in truth admired. But a spy who came to Tonestain in the evening hour told of a horse full caparisoned hid in a hut among the sand-hills of Saint Ouen. And, as luck would have it, Gundred by chance supplied the missing clue.

Tonestain put a question, which she roused herself to answer.

Aye, she had seen them, Algitha and Goyault, ride through the trees as she herself emerged from out them. Later, they were stealing towards the cliffs.

"The cliffs?" said Tonestain, with a wrinkle in his brow.

"If I can give my lord naught else, let me give him his revenge!" Gundred said bitterly. "For once I mind me that I saw a little postern door shut in the folding of the rock nigh water-mark under the peak of Gros-Nez, and there were traces of a perilous path from ledge to ledge and under hanging heights—a place of deadly peril, but by that path Goyault has led his wife to safety."

"Safety? No, lady, for I go to pluck them from their nest."

Thus, while fresh men were pouring from outlying districts into camp and joining in the fray, while Karadac had run the gauntlet of lance-windows with their showering arrows to strike the gate with armoured hand and call for swift surrender, Tonestain and his men gained the forgotten little postern by the tide-lip, and, entering the Castle, crept up to where Alghitha waited with her maidens.

And Alghitha, before she knew, was prisoner, for all had been so subtly planned, so quickly done, so deadly sure, that not a fugitive—nay, not a cry—betrayed the stealing enemy.

Then Tonestain, with a handful of his following, went forth upon the walls and shouted for Goyault. And those who pressed the siege without, heard and drove on with hope renewed. The while Goyault, a sudden pallor on his cheek, bade his men strike and spare not.

"Hold, Goyault! As I die, thy wife dies also." Tonestain raised his hand.

And a sweet high voice arose from within the tower:

"Strike, my lord! strike, Goyault! What is my life to be compared with victory? Strike for I fear not!"

But Goyault groaned aloud, and cast his sword at Tonestain's feet and cursed him where he stood.

With ebb of tide rain ceased to fall, but the wind still screamed across the ocean, as the great gates were set wide and the garrison came forth, laying down their arms beside the guard-tower, now held by Karadac's retainers.

Alghitha, standing within the portcullis, heard the grumbling of the sullen men-at-arms, she caught the malignant glance of the old lean, long-armed captain of Gros-Nez, and well she knew that each man cursed her beneath his breath as being the cause of Goyault's quarrel and his conquest. That day's surrender robbed Goyault of much of his renown, and by so much the more was the Count exalted to heights of praise as one invincible. The meed of victory was doubly his, since Goyault faced him as rival both in love and arms.

Alghitha's proud heart grew hot and sick, but never had she looked more dauntless and more lovely than when she moved to join Goyault as he was led before her, half-mailed and swordless.

His head was bare, the blustering winds touched its circling curls, his face was set, and he carried himself no longer shamed or broken to the presence of his lord. The blot upon his honour weighed him down no more; he remembered only the fierce kiss, given though it was in saddest error and with no thought of sin, that still lay unavenged, an outrage on his wife's fair purity.

So they two, hand in hand, approached the ordered group, where Karadac stood tall, even to the most careless glance marked out as master of the multitude—a stately figure, fateful-eyed. Round him his knights, and, an ell or two withdrawn, Gundred, whom her lord had bidden to her place as his wife and lady. But, alas! she noted that never once throughout that hour did his face seek hers. He gave her all reverence, but not one single look.

As Goyault came nearer Karadac raised his visor, and the two looked upon each other. Karadac could have sighed—Goyault forsworn, and yet defiant!

A heavy silence prefaced the coming storm.

"Have you aught to say, Sieur of Saint Ouen?" asked the Count, coldly.

"Aye, much that touches on our case as liege and vassal, and more of that which lies between us, man and man," replied Goyault.

"Speak on."

Goyault had no need to see the visored faces; well he knew what hidden smiles were waiting his defence.

"My lady Alghitha was your guest with me at Mont Orgueil, lord Count. Why were we hunted thence like wolves?" The question burst from wrathful lips, which yet omitted not to use diplomacy.

Karadac's expression gave no sign how deeply the rude challenge thrust at the sorest point of his deception.

"Your flight was the sole issue of your dishonour as a knight, and the guile that juggled with my blindness to secure its own designs," he answered calmly. "Had you not been forsworn, what need had ever been to fly, fearing my vengeance?"

This strong statement, unabashed and clear, from one so reticent, called up a warmth towards his cause in every listening knight. How much such words cost him none but Gundred knew; the feeling which almost turned him coward on the point; the courage that bade him handle it under man's eyes, was but to few known in those rude days.

Alghitha raised her haughty head.

"He fled to save me, lord Count!" she cried accusingly.

"Lady, by one word of truth he had saved you more manfully," Karadac rejoined.

"Manfulness—do you speak of manfulness?" she went on.

"The noble Count of Gersay wars against women, in good sooth! You never could have broken through our castle gates, therefore you must needs use subterfuge. By stratagem and threat of violence to me you forced my lord's submission. I would that he had prized me less, and shamed you by my death through all the world!"

Karadac was bereft of words in listening to her voice. That form, which in his blind fancy he had cherished these long months past, stood now before him, possessed as by some alien spirit. It is hard to think of one whom we have loved and known turned on a sudden to a stranger, speaking in a voice all unfamiliar to the expectant ear. So it was with him. This woman, whose form and flesh and beauty imagination had rendered his own possession and daily near to him, was sundered far within one short day's space. These thoughts she uttered were not the thoughts of Alghitha as he knew them; the voice was a happy harpstring tone, but not that which in his blindness had met his questionings and answered his deep vows of love.

Alghitha's passion flamed up and fell before the silence of the Count.

"I await your answer, Sieur of Saint Ouen," Karadac spoke with effort, turning to Goyault. "A knight forsworn, what have you yet to say? Here on this heath you laid your hands in mine and swore me fealty, then you went forth with oaths upon your lips to serve me truly, and to hold my honour at your own."

"In that indeed I wronged you, Count, but you have since wiped out my fault in one far greater."

Karadac gazed at him, confounded by the accusation, but the red rose on Alghitha's white cheek enlightened him.

"An error that falsehood betrayed me to could never be regarded as offence," he answered. "Would you desire me to lay this matter before my knights here present?"

"Nay," said Goyault, with a downcast head. "That may pass."

"Well, let it pass. But your defence—what of those matters in Grenezay?"

"Nay, that he cannot answer." Alghitha stood forth again, her blue eyes aflame. "Can he boast that all unawares he won the love of her he battled for so bravely? Hear me, lord Count! I had rather die a hundred dreadful deaths as witch, born upon this earth without a heart to love, than be your wife! I had long loved my Lord Goyault, and with him only would I wed. And he had pity on me!"

Proudly she boasted of her love, all rose and gold, like some pure morning sky.

And in sooth the men who looked upon her forgave Goyault. It was beyond human power to risk the losing of such loveliness.

"Lady, I loved you well," Karadac's response came low and full of a strange thrill, "but never, as I am knight, had I forced love upon you! Your lord was long my friend and companion; he knew me well. Did he so wrong me in your ears that you should fear to come with him to Gersay and tell me all the truth?"

Alghitha, at the first word, drew back abashed, and at the last she faltered:

"Nay, lord Count, but you were blind—that moved him."

"Moved him?" repeated Karadac, in the same low tone; "moved him, say you—to treason and to lies? A cruel truth had been the kinder!"

The night was blowing up with banking clouds, and Karadac, looking once upon the sky, gave judgment.

"What have you to say, Sieur Goyault?"

"Nothing," said Goyault from between set teeth. "Much has been said my tongue had never spoken. Naught remains but to hear and bear my punishment."

"It is one which should accord with love like yours," Karadac said, slowly. "You, with your fair wife, are banished to the lonely Ocean Tower that lies one long sea-league from Saint Ouen's shore. They say it stood upon a hill before the waters rolled in upon the sunken valleys, before the wind drove in those wastes of sand to choke the corn and cattle on the hills that circle round the bay. It is old and desolate; none shall dwell there but you twain. At times a boat shall bring you all you need. There live with love."

Then Alghitha took her lord's hand again, and upraised that fair face of hers to Heaven.

"Aye, we counted all the cost, my lord and I, in those sweet hours when first we loved. Gladly do we lose all for love. There shall we dwell together, he and I, with love alone to help us, and most happy!"

"I wish you happy, lady, as the years wane. But, hear me, Goyault, the day that you break prison shall be your last."

"Why should we come forth?" Alghitha cried again. "There shall we possess all in each other—a world within a world."

CHAPTER IV.

GOYAULT.

AT evening a little boat crept to the shore and there swung waiting. Under the dulling blue the pool of Saint Ouen lay like a moss agate, dusky grey, patterned with reeds.

They stopped and looked upon it, then came down hand in hand, lingering like lovers on the winding path, Goyault and Algitha. The little boat moved out upon a sea of glass, and those two, looking westwards, saw their prison black and ruinous against a paling sky.

"You are not sad, Algitha?"

She made a little movement towards him.

"Never have I been happier. But for you, Goyault, how will you bear it? Tilting and hawking—cut off from all a man's delights?"

His arm was round her.

"Nay, sweet, I carry with me the chiefest of my delights?"

Having landed them the men of Karadac rowed away, and alone they walked across the coarse sea-grasses to their tower; and there alone they dwelt amid the sounding waters, while the bleak winter days drew on. Nor wind nor weather pierced the portion of the ruin that Karadac had prepared for them. Fuel and food had they in abundance, and lacked for nothing, save the essential right to live among their kind.

The long mornings died into long afternoons, and afternoon's early sea-grey ending saw a few lights twinkle out along the distant curve of shore, and so the long evening came. Darkness clung in tumult round their dwelling through storm-racked nights; from week to week the very walls were drenched in spray. So they lived with love alone to help them.

At first absorbed in idle-sweet monotony they watched sunrise and sunset, and the moon grow up behind the sand dunes; then by degrees that rich joyousness of life together merged into a vast content. A day marked here and there by some new surprise drawn from further knowledge of each other, which quickened the pulse of love.

Thus they lived in exile in their stone prison by the sea.

It was Karadac's wont to send to them a boat at intervals; but those who came with it spoke not to the prisoners of the isle. The world went on without them; but Goyault, as time flowed, thought more often of his people and his Castle of Gros-Nez. He began to yearn for a sight of those tall towers and heavy curving walls and bastions. At night he limned upon the darkness that picture of it which pursued him ever—outlined in burning gold against a stormy evening, as he was wont to see it in those bygone days when he rode home weary and happy after a long day spent with hawk or hound.

All this Algitha knew in her heart and grieved for, but spoke nothing, since there are some sorrows which, once hardened into words, fret the more sorely.

But one afternoon of sad, dense grey, as they two walked the

rocks and looked out across the sea-fog for the boat whose time was due, and each felt shamed to hunger for the sight of strangers, and strove to hide the wish one from the other, Goyault began to speak of the past days, and so told her all the story of Karadac and his blindness, and the long night spent listening to the falling rain and voices of the storm. And still the boat delayed, until there blew towards them from the land a keen cliff wind, and through the clearing air they saw the boat coming, and above it shone a wan young moon.

"Another moon, another hour," said Goyault.

"And did his moon, the black Count's moon, shine red that night?"

"Aye, for I remember how I saw it—a red and doomful moon, reflected deep amongst the broken water of the pool."

A long silence hung between them.

"I would, sweet, that we two were once more at Gros-Nez," Goyault said at last, and groaned for very longing. "I love the

bleak singing of the blast, and every stone that builds my Castle, from rock-foot up to tower!"

Algitha laid her head against his shoulder and said the words which she knew Goyault must utter soon or late.

"Let us leave this desolation, Goyault. You are too meek in your long yielding to the Count's will. You have forbidden those to help us who yearn to set you back into your rightful place. Let us go hence to France and sue your pardon—if pardon indeed be needed—from the Duke. A signal to the shore—no more—and we are free!"

"Aye, and that would I do but for the love I bear Gros-Nez. If I broke prison and appealed to William, Karadac would pull my towers, stone from stone, till naught remained but ruins. I cannot, Algitha!"

And no more passed between them till the boat's stem touched the rock and men went to and fro bearing provisions to the tower, but silent all. And one stayed in the boat, and upon him in the gloaming Algitha came with her beauty and shining eyes, and asked him softly:

"What of Gros-Nez, boatman? Who rules there now my lord is absent?"

And he, not hearing her soft footstep, glanced up and saw the starry eyes and wondrous form, and bethought him of the witch men called her and cried out in fear—

"Avaunt! Would'st confound my poor soul also? Avaunt, thou curse upon this good land of God! Gros-Nez, good sooth, that was so strong but yesterday, that even Karadac, the great count, but won it through a stratagem! Who rules there now? Nay, I know not; the Evil One no doubt! For the bats chirp already in the broken corners of the walls, the wild cat nests upon its hearthstones, and the wind cries lonely through its roofless towers. You brought a curse there with you, witch!" and so crossed himself.

Algitha stepped back in silence and watched the boat away again, for now she knew their exile was not long.

(To be continued.)



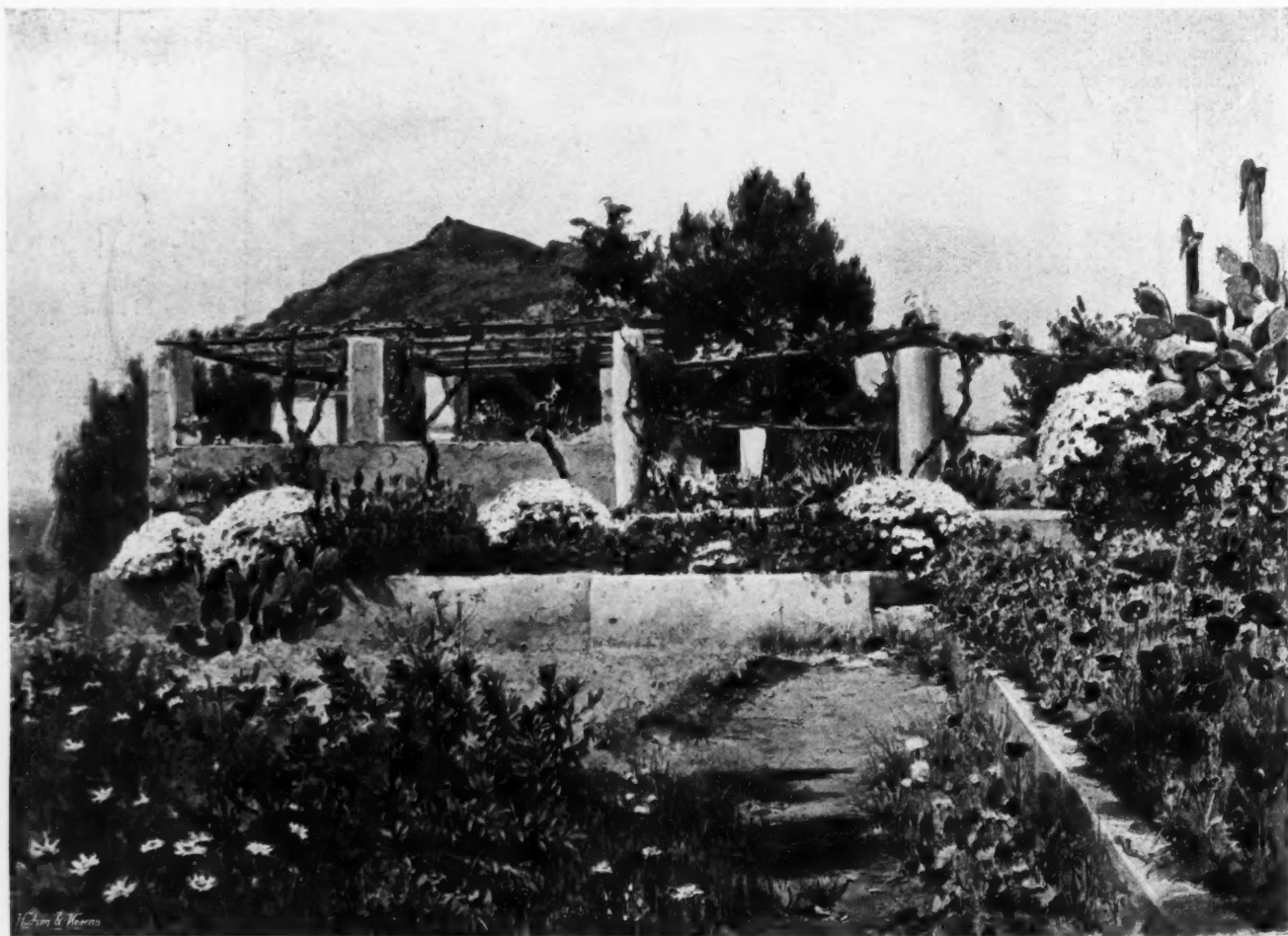
F. & R. Speaight. DAISY, DAUGHTER OF LADY ALINE BEAUMONT. Copyright



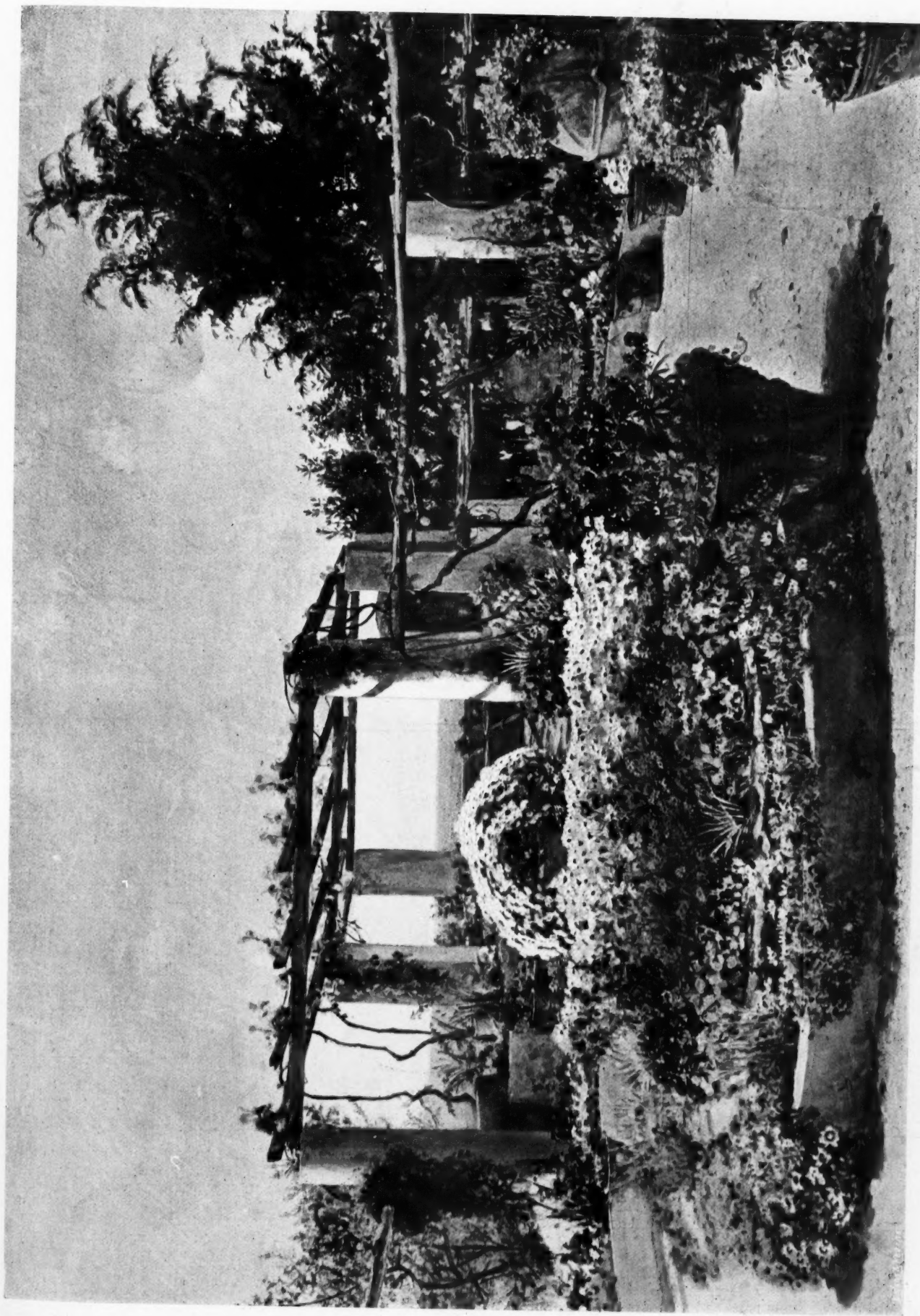
IT can surely hardly be amiss to prefix a few editorial observations to an article which, since it is concerned with Capri and some of its gardens, might at the first sight seem hardly to come within the purview of this series. As a matter of fact, the explanation, by no means the excuse, of the article is of the simplest and most pleasing character. At one and the same time it has become possible to avail ourselves of some graceful letterpress by one who knows her Italy passing well, and of a number of garden pictures out of those which Mr. E. A. Rowe, the well-known garden artist, will exhibit at the Dowdeswell Galleries for a few weeks after March 6th. The pictures are of exceptional charm, and the mission of *COUNTRY LIFE* has always been fulfilled when it has placed things beautiful under the eyes of its readers. As, therefore, good wine needs no bush, so good pictures need no apology; but in this case there is something of a special character in the gardens represented, a character running through the whole series, which renders a few words necessary by way of suggestion. In a word, there is here a lesson, which he who runs may read.

Nowhere in the world can there be found anything to touch the classic gardens of Great Britain. Their noble spaces, their velvet turf, their gleaming moats, their wealth of roses, their grey and russet and weather-beaten walls, their cool retreats, their infinite variety, their blending of the old

and the new—all these are things quite by themselves. Also the cottage gardens of Southern England, the narrow strips of ground in which the genius of flowers and colour seems to riot, in which common herbaceous plants attain a luxuriance which seems quite beyond the reach of costly cultivation, are among the most precious possessions of the country. Wallflower and hollyhock, pink and sweet William of the "homely cottage smell," lavender and dahlia, and climbing and clothing rose have here their natural environment, and the result is an almost year-long joy to the eye, to say nothing of a feast of old-world fragrance. But, to be plain, between these two extremes, although there be many gardens that are good in which we would by no means see a feature changed, and although of this last genus the species are many in number, it is not to be denied that in this country we do not always use narrow opportunities and limited spaces to the best advantage, and that where they are not neglected altogether they are too often entirely spoiled by inartistic treatment. It is in this kind of gardening that the dwellers on the shores of the Mediterranean offer us a lesson. The Villa Quercia, for example, provides quite a large group of really exquisite garden-pictures, yet of that garden the approximate measurements are 30ft. by 50ft. or 60ft., and in May it is a perfect blaze of colour. Again, the typical pergola entrances to the villas and hotels of Capri are in marked contrast to the efforts in the same direction which are too often made in this



MONTE SOLARO FROM VILLA QUERCIA.



PERGOLA AT VILLA QUERCIA.

country in a spirit of pretentious feebleness. This must not be twisted into recommendation of slavish imitation in matters of detail of Italian methods in this country. North is north, and south is south, and a dripping pergola is inconvenient as an approach to an English house, although it may well have its place near it. Moreover, with the best will in the world, we cannot induce the English sun to produce Italian effects. But the Italian spirit may be followed with good results, and it may be gathered from the pictures and the words which follow.

The island of Capri is said to have been formed by an earthquake that loosened the last spurs of the Apennines from the mainland, and converted them into the small isle that under the Empire became the resort of more than one Roman Emperor, and that Virgil immortalised in his song. The beauty of the villas and gardens—of a limited number, but perfect in their way

of solidity and stability that forms a delightful contrast to the light graceful creepers that cling around and about them. The pergola is overlaid with rafters of wood, placed flat on the top, which though arranged in absolute regularity have not such a fixed appearance as to spoil the artistic effect of the whole. In one of these views the introduction of a fine piece of stonework in the centre of the picture is to be noticed. One tier after another leads up at rounded and stated intervals to a stone avalanche of flowers, leaving, however, sufficient space in between the leaves and petals to disclose the decorative stonework. A more beautiful setting for plants and flowers it would be difficult to imagine, and the falling clusters of blossom over the white of the marble form a striking contrast as to substance and colour which the artist has grasped in the full force of its beauty and effectiveness. Large red pots with different designs on each of them, and filled with high-growing blossoming shrubs, increase the beauty of the scene, and lend to it a marked sense of dignity and symmetry that is full of harmony and repose. The cactus plants, growing high and vigorous among their more lovable neighbours of soft and tender hues, remind one of the Southern setting in which the picture stands, and when to this is added the glory of an almost tropical sun, with the soft glow that melts into the mist of sea and distant sky, the combination is about as perfect as the eye of man can behold.

The view beyond the pergola opens out to the stillness of the sea, for here, as Mr. T. A. Symonds says, "The Bay of Naples expands before us with those sweeping curves and azure amplitude that all the poets of the world have sung." It would seem as though the same writer had seen, in his mind's eye, the lovely sketches that are now engrossing our attention. When describing Capri he writes: "The roads are sweet with scent of acacia and orange flowers. When you walk in a garden at night, the white specks beneath your feet are fallen petals of lemon blossoms. Over the walls hang cataracts of roses, honey pale clusters of the Banksia rose, and pink bushes of the China rose, growing as we never see them grow with us. The grey rocks wave with gladiolus—feathers of crimson set amid tufts of rosemary and myself and tree-spurge. In the cleft of the sandstone and behind the orchard walls sleeps a dark green night of foliage, in the midst of which gleam globed oranges, and lemons dropping like great pearls of palest amber dew."

The first view of the Villa Quercia garden gives the same

stone pergola as seen in the second view, only it is now presented from another side. Here some of the columns stand on a broad basis of stone, while below this basis a wide stone fence flanks two sides of a square, enclosing a border of flowers of every hue, tint, and scent, and impressing on us again the beautiful combination of the stiff, stern marble and the graceful unfettered growth of the flowers. It is a blending of grave and gay, of restraint and freedom, peculiar to the site, and suggestive of as happy a mixture of Art and Nature as can well be brought about. The background of this picture shows the peak of Monte Solaro, rising bleak, bare, and uncultivated, neither graceful in shape nor pretentious as to height, but completing the picture with an effect of rising ground that is harmonious and appropriate.

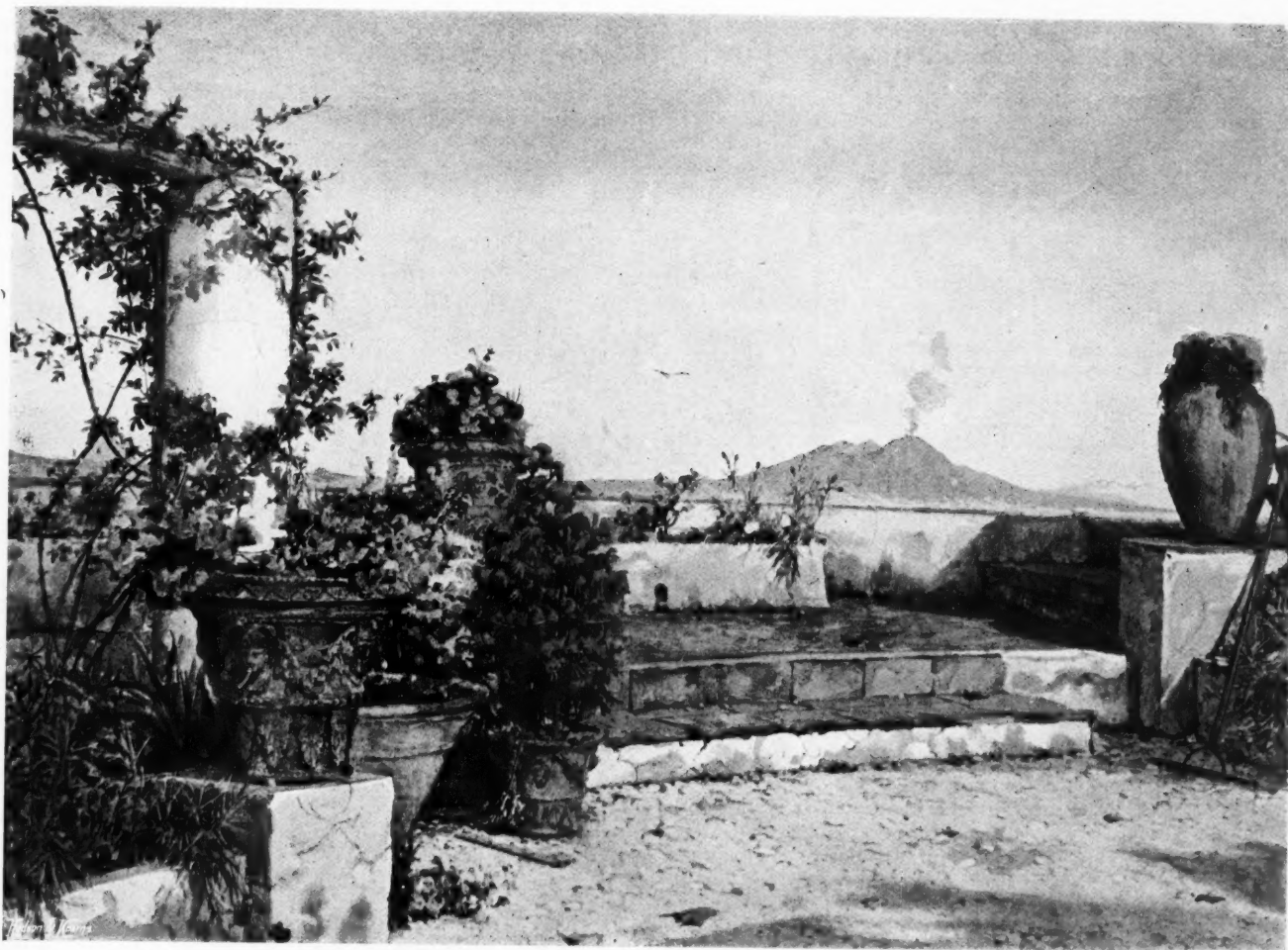
The sixth view gives an excellent idea of red pots and vases,



CASTELLO FROM THE HOTEL.

—cannot fail to attract artists and travellers, while the glow and colouring over land and sky and sea are so intense as to conjure up visions of the East and strengthen one's faith as to the existence of an Isle of the Blest.

The beauty of such scenes is vividly brought before us in the views that are now under consideration, and we realise that a subject of extraordinary loveliness is here revealed to us, presented by a masterly hand and treated with a skill that makes for success in its happy combination of grace and power. There are three views taken of or from the Villa Quercia (the Oak Villa) that are exceedingly beautiful and interesting. The chief feature of these drawings is that of the treatment of stonework and of red-brick vases. The pergola brought before us in two of these pictures is made of splendid columns of stone, some of them round, the others square, but all presenting a look



VESUVIUS FROM CAPRI.



TELEGRAPH HILL FROM VILLA.

different in shape and size, and grouped in a way to show off to advantage this style of decorative gardening. The irregular breaking up of the lines, the disposal of colour, now high, now low, now falling, now rising erect, is as simple as it is striking, and offers a subject peculiarly attractive to all lovers of beauty.

The fourth picture under consideration deals with a view of Mount Vesuvius from another villa at Capri different to those hitherto noticed, and showing a wider extent of horizon, a greater breadth of sky, while the stillness of the scene is lightened by the volcano in fiery activity in the background. The foreground is again devoted to the treatment of flowers and stonework. Broad steps, walls, parapets, vases, and jars are all introduced with taste and effect; and on one side stands a fine column supporting the angle of a pergola, and wreathed with a wealth of roses rejoicing in the vigour of their growth and beauty. The rake resting just below a classical shaped jar—that might have held one of Ali Baba's forty thieves, and doubtless did once hold oil—tells of care and labour in the garden and testifies to us that, generous as Nature is in this favoured clime, she does not dispense with the help and toil of man.

The view of the Villa San Felice is a beautiful example of the artist's power in perspective and architectural drawing,

The sketch giving a view of the hill where a telegraph station has been set up, deals again with the pergolas and the stone columns that support them. The columns in this drawing give, however, the idea that they are simply blocks of masonry, plastered over with mortar and generally used for the training of vines. This is a practice common in Capri, and many a pergola built of bricks and mortar, and intended merely as a spot to grow grapes in, has been pressed into the service of a garden, and serves for the culture of both vines and flowers, the foreground in the corner showing to advantage a cascade of bloom such as is often seen in Italy, and displaying to perfection the grace and charm of this universally favourite plant. The rampant growth of the flowers, and the sturdiness of the plants, such as lilies, yuccas, and blossoming cactus, proclaim more forcibly than words can do the latitudes in which these scenes are laid, and transplant us in fancy to the sunny South, to roam at will through the land of the cypress and myrtle.

Very lovely is the view from the hotel at Capri away to the castle perched on the mountain peak that overlooks the sea. On one side is seen a sheer precipice of some hundred feet down into the water, and that may represent the very site where the Emperor Tiberius ordered condemned prisoners to be



VILLA QUERCIA, CAPRI.

as well as in that of flower and shrub. The colonnade resting on a high elevation of stonework, and with poles of wood laid on the top of somewhat squat capitals to form a pergola, would seem to have belonged formerly to a church, or to have been the portico of some large and stately mansion. Again, a high and handsome red-brick vase, with a fine pattern on it, forms an important feature on the left-hand side looking towards the picture. Through stately pillars, canopied overhead with vine, blossom, and creeper, the vista leads to a narrow doorway, flooded with light, where a child stands lolling idly, indifferent to the dog beside her, and giving him no encouragement to hope that any of the good things he dreams of in her basket can ever fall to his share. The background is filled in with the high dome of a church and with several houses, most of them with flat roofs, reminding one of the East and of a climate where life on the housetops appeals more to the inhabitants than existence within walls and under a roof. The pavement, now rough and uneven, shows signs of having once been laid in patterned order, probably in that large, bold mosaic work so beautiful to behold, and so well adapted to represent a carpet of gorgeous hue, where stones form the colour and design and take the place of wool and silk.

cast into the sea under his eye, while on a ledge below were stationed men who with poles and oars had orders to pound under the waves any who tried to escape. The scene of peace and beauty here set before us wipes away such recollections, and leaves us free to rejoice in the present, oblivious of the horrors and bloodshed of the past. The composition of this sketch is extremely effective; on one side it is flanked by the picturesque hotel, and on the other by a fine row of columns, faithfully fulfilling their office in helping to form a pergola, and stately in the beauty and dignity of their lines. Vigorous creepers clothe the walls of the house, while plants are dotted about where the space allows of it, gladdening the senses of sight and smell, and completing the picture by a harmonious rendering of shapes and colours.

Capri lies to the south of the Bay of Naples, and a sketch shows a corner of the bay on the north-east side, girt with distant, shadowy hills, and calm in the repose of a hot summer day. The middle distance gives the flat-roofed houses that abound in the town of Capri, together with some fine trees. These trees stand above the houses, one of them being a grand specimen of the stone pine. The spreading branches of this *Pinus pinea* are suggestive of shade and protection, and would



VILLA SAN FELICE.



BAY OF NAPLES FROM CAPRI.

seem to offer a haven of refuge to all who care to shelter under them and escape from the burning, blinding heat. On one side of the stone pine rise some straight cypress trees, stern and stately in their folded grace, and contrasting harmoniously with their expanding, branching neighbour. In the foreground we have again a lovely feast of flowers, either in vases or kept more or less within bounds between the stone fencings with which we

are already familiar, and creepers. The tumbled *luxu* of roses, geraniums, and other bright blossoms is delightful to see, and forces on one the conviction that the flowers themselves rejoice in the fact of their existence. It gives one, too, a sense of the radiance of life, and makes one thankful to live in a world where such beauties not only exist, but may be brought before us in so truly artistic and charming a way. ALETHEA WIEL.

AT THE SIGN OF THE ANGLE.—I.

THE object of our fishing club was not altogether, nor even primarily, to catch fish. That idea, no doubt, was at the back of our minds in the formation of the club, but it only entered in an indirect way. The art and science of fishing was certain to be the topic of constant discussion, and thence we might hope to learn skill in the snaring of the fish with the angle; but primarily the club was a conversation club, a club meeting at various odd times for the end of dining and discussion *de omnibus rebus et quibus—dam aliis*, but with this for its common bond between members—that all confessed themselves disciples of the great man and father of anglers, Isaac Walton the good. It was a club, as Robert Burscough, who had been a good deal in America, said, that would resolve itself mainly into a "lie-swapping caucus." That was only his exaggerated Transatlantic way of putting it, at which nobody would take offence, he being in a way a privileged person, and "meaning no harm," as we all said. It was certain that no member would willingly deviate by one hair's breadth, or by one ounce of a fish's weight, from the truth, but it might just so happen that, the vivid imagination of the angler misleading him, he might unwittingly add half an inch or so to a fish's stature. This would pass, however, entirely without offence. Indeed, the disposition to this liberal generosity of the fancy is recognised in an axiom of the commonplace book of the club, that runs: "There are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it; but there are none as good as some that have been hooked and lost." Undoubtedly these loom in the eyes of the disappointed angler rather larger than they would scale. In which regard I might venture another quotation from that very witty little volume, the commonplace book of the Houghton Fishing Club. It comes under the heading of "Miseries of Fishing," and is numbered as the thirty-first out of thirty-two distinct and several miseries. It

is this: "Telling a long story after dinner, tending to show (with full particulars of time and place) how that, under very difficult circumstances, and notwithstanding very great skill on your part, your tackle had been that morning broken and carried away by a very large fish; and then having the identical fly lost by you on that occasion returned to you by one of your party, who found it in the mouth of a trout caught by him about an hour after your disaster on the very spot so accurately described by you, the said very large fish being, after all, a very small one."

This is the kind of incident that is apt to make the hero think himself a very small one—for the time being only, be it said. It is a frame of mind that ought not, in an angler of properly-constituted nature, to have long life. The elastic and hopeful spirit is emphatically the disposition proper to the angler who would command success.

The club had for its principal object, then, the conversation, and the conversation being tolerably certain, without stringent rules to that end, to turn on fishy topics, seeing of whom the club membership was composed, and the said members being in the habit of making expeditions to various parts of the British Isles and the rest of the habitable, or uninhabitable, globe for the purpose of fishing, it seemed likely that the sum total of the exchange of their experiences (described by young Mr. Burscough in less reverent terms) would make up a respectable body of fishing lore and information as to the fortune likely to await fishers in the various "airts and parts" to which the members were carried by the excess of their piscatorial zeal. Thus Lapland, after salmon, and the Gulfs of Mexico and Florida, after the tarpon and the colossal sea-bat, were not beyond the beat of some of the members, while others contented themselves with holiday jaunts into the many likely, and still more numerous unlikely, corners of England, Scotland, Wales,

and Ireland, the whole of this vast experience being compressed into the moderate human space that could be accommodated round an ordinary dining-table. The members were under a solemn engagement to bring to the adornment of the room in which these dinners were held any remarkable specimens that their angling skill had procured for them, and the first serious disturbance of the harmony commonly prevailing was occasioned by the failure of the vice-president of the club, Professor Fleg himself, to hang upon the walls of the club-room a specimen of some fish for which he had gone to the Mexican Gulf to angle, giving, as the utterly trivial and unworthy reason for his failure to comply with this elementary rule of the club, the excuse, which seemed to mock the intelligence of the other members, that the room was of insufficient dimensions to accommodate the "specimen."

An act of this apparent discourtesy and a joke in this doubtful taste were so diametrically opposed to the habitual disposition of the professor, that the members could scarcely believe their ears when he calmly gave this as his reason, after being called to account, immediately on his return, by the club's president, Colonel Burscough.

"Surely it is impossible," said the colonel, sternly, fixing Mr. Fleg severely with his most martial air, "that the vice-president can be trifling with the members of the club."

"Far from it, indeed, my dear sir," Mr. Fleg returned,

mildly; "far from it, indeed. But the members are perhaps unaware of the dimensions of this gigantic fish."

We confessed our ignorance, and awaited the professor's words.

"The sea-bat, as it is termed in America," said the professor, "the *Manta brevirostra* of science, is, as you are probably aware, a member of the skate or ray family. On either side of its immense flattish body the fins are extended almost after the fashion of wings. The first specimen that I had the fortune to capture measured, I may inform you, just twenty-four feet from wing-tip to wing-tip. In length it was, as to its body, twelve and a-half feet from mouth to base of tail, and the tail itself was some nine feet longer again. From these dimensions," said the professor, gazing, with a mild beam of triumph in his eye, on an assembly that was nearly turned to stone by his statement, "you will see that to hang the creature on the wall of a room of which the one long side is intersected by a fireplace and the other by the windows would be, shall we say, inconvenient. It would at least seem as if your vice-president were allotting to himself somewhat too much of the space on your walls."

"It would at least make my record grayling look rather under-sized," observed the member whose name adorned the glass case inhabited by a goodly stuffed *Thymallus*.

In the meantime we had drawn up chairs around the fire, and spent the rest of the evening in a kind of fairy-land or aquatic Brobdingnag that had the Gulf of Mexico for its scene and Professor Fleg for its Gulliver.

BIRD PLAGIARISTS.

EARLY in March the gulls begin to leave town. Only a few linger on till the end of the month, and by the second week in April the last stragglers have gone. The gulls have been extending their sphere in London, and this season they have effected a large colony between the Albert and Victoria Bridges. The so-called black-headed gulls—which in no stage of their life merit the name—of course predominate in numbers, but this winter Londoners have had an opportunity of watching a certain number of herring gulls and many common gulls. The new and favourite gathering place of these three species of gulls in London during the autumn and winter, is close to the small wooden pier erected some years ago for the Naval Exhibition in the grounds of the Chelsea Pensioners' Royal Hospital. Here the birds are to be seen at rest, at their toilette and ablutions, and at their meals; and there are two occasions every day when the sight is to be enjoyed at its best, namely, when the tide is high, storming up in its masterful and fascinating way, swirling round the brick and iron work of bridge and the wooden posts of pier, and again when the tide is dead low, and the river looks so insignificant that you may almost fancy yourself swimming across it in a few strong strokes. When thus shrunken, the Thames leaves high and fairly dry, in addition to a great quantity of mud, two or three bars of shingle. On these scraps of beach, rarely disturbed by boating folk or idle boys, the birds form a regular gallery. As many as 500 have been counted standing about in the shallow water, or on the shingle and mud. On the pier they sit in two long rows, giving each other occasional pushes or kissecks,

perpetually preening their plumage, and sometimes engaging in most animated conversation. As a rule, the railings of the pier are occupied only by the black-headed gulls, but from time to time the larger bird, the common gull, claims a place, and on rarer occasions the largest species of the three, the herring gull, which has a wing 1½ ft. in length when fully expanded, and is with the exception of the great black-backed gull—never seen on the Thames—the giant of the family, so far as the British Islands are concerned. The toilette of birds is a much more important function than commonly supposed.

The gulls spend a considerable portion of the day on their toilette, but they are not singular in this respect among wild birds. Nobody who has watched the yellowhammer washing in a puddle on a bitter winter day—and sipping the while its bath water—or a London sparrow or a country skylark enjoying its dust-bath, can doubt the scrupulously cleanly habits of such creatures. But when the tide comes flooding in, then the gulls cease washing and preening themselves, and are up and away, sweeping backwards and forwards over the stream in search of their food. The supply would seem indeed to be very abundant, though its quality may not be exactly nice. The menu is a varied and, except to the gulls themselves, anything but a pleasant one to consider. The greater the refuse, the greater perhaps the delicacy to these creatures.

Till recently the gulls enjoyed practically a monopoly of the refuse of the river, but they are now no longer to have it so. Three species of very clever and watchful birds, residents more or less throughout the entire year in London, have not watched

the gulls in vain; these three are starling, carrion crow, and sparrow. There is no doubt that the starling is a plagiarist. He, in a wild as well as a tame state, will mimic the song of the thrush in masterly fashion; he will take flies and other small insects in the air much as the swallow does. Now he has watched the movements of the gulls, and as a result taken to the water. The gulls, black-headed and common, fly up and down the tide as it rushes upwards bearing its rubbish and refuse of all kinds. As they fly one can see them glancing swiftly from side to side in order not to miss any morsel worth picking up. Directly some scrap of food is seen beneath the gull stops for a moment, drops down, and picks it deftly off the water. Very rarely does the bird miss its aim. It is perfectly at home, of course, in the air and in the water, being to the manner born. It would not matter if the bird lost its balance and wetted its wing feathers in the stream, because water is its element. Yet, as a matter of fact, no more of the bird than the tips of its webbed feet ever strike the water when this swift drop is being accomplished. Except when it is bathing in the shallows, or when a shower of rain comes, the gull never allows its wing feathers to get wet; in settling on the water it folds its wings with much care and precision against its sides.



William Reid.

IN SEARCH OF A MEAL.

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The starling of London has seen the whole performance, and come out as a competitor. When the tide is at its full, starlings in twos and threes, starlings in larger parties, may often be seen at and above Chelsea and Battersea, quartering the river in most scientific style. When first witnessed, the bird's performance seems very droll. Owing to its far inferior length of wing and power of flight, the starling cannot suddenly stop and swoop down with the ease of the gull when about to seize some morsel of food. On the contrary, the bird has to hover over the spot where the food is, its wings all the time vibrating more like a humming-bird hawk-moth's than a small English bird's. The starling gives one the idea of being very uncomfortable lest it should fall into the rushing river and get drowned, though probably it is fearful of no such catastrophe. Not every scrap of food sighted and aimed at by the starling is secured, and yet the bird persists, and will keep on the wing for a good many minutes before retiring to the shore for a rest. Then there is the sparrow. It is no new thing to see this bird on the little river beaches, at the water's edge, and on the empty and moored steamboats and barges. But now the sparrow has taken to the tide, as have the starlings. Occasionally it tries to hover starling-like, but its exertions avail very little. More commonly it will share with one or two starlings an old crate, a bunch of hay, or some other improvised raft which the tide is carrying up; and from this perch it is able to collect small odds and ends floating at the surface. The sparrows' visits to the water are, however, far more spasmodic than the starlings', and last only a short time—at the most about three or four minutes at a stretch.

Finally comes the carrion crow. He, too, must imitate the gulls, and now and then, when a large scrap of food has been found and seized, buffet and in turn, be buffeted by them. The crow's gyrations over the water and his clumsy hoverings and swoops are ludicrous to watch; yet, flapping about 'twixt hunger and discomfort over an element that is distinctly not his, he does manage to sweep a certain amount of food off the tide, though his misses are numerous. His visits to the water are not so frequent as the starlings', and it is pretty clear that he is a suspect among the gulls, whereas the smaller birds are immune from any attacks whilst hovering over the tide, or walking about the beach or mud flats. In all, then, there are six species of birds which now regularly frequent the London Thames and find food on every tide; these are the black-headed gull, the common gull, the herring gull, the starling, the house-sparrow, and the carrion crow. Quite lately a seventh species has been constantly seen crossing the river at various points about Chelsea and Battersea, and calling from the plane trees. This is the magpie, several pairs of which birds have been released in London within the last few months. Why should not this gay and clever bird, with its odd, jerky flight and friendly call, become a regular Londoner like crow or starling? It might nest among the buildings, even as it does in districts in Southern Norway, where I have often watched it. London indeed might well be made a perfect sanctuary for species so hard pressed in every game-preserving district as the crow and the magpie. I believe that even the jay might be induced to live in town, though happily he is yet abundant in many parts of rural England.

GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

A GARDEN . . . GONE BANKRUPT.

"UNLESS previously replevied," said the announcement in our local paper. I had never heard this phrase before; I do not now know exactly what it means, but as I drove to the Sale I had the feeling that if it were replevied, kindness would have prevailed, and if it were not replevied, stern commercial justice would run its course. It was a soft mild January day and the roads were heavy. As I approached the curious piece of country in our neighbourhood which has become the home of small hopeful settlers, who erect tin houses, do a good deal with chickens, and search for a precarious livelihood under the low boughs of "bush-fruits," I saw little groups of men, in those very long

overcoats, who attend all kinds of sales, and never lose over a purchase. Soon, upon the slope of a hill composed of the most adhesive clay I ever remember, I came upon the nurseries whose stock was to be auctioned at "Half-past one for two o'clock."

Punctually at two a dapper little rat-faced man moved off in the direction of Lot 1. There was something timorous and diffident about "Lot 1. Two rows of small shrubs." I looked upon the ground as a group of Overcoats clustered round the auctioneer, and was unable to make out anything in the rough soil except dry but invincible couch grass. Still, something was rapidly knocked down for two shillings.

The sale proceeded; a big puffy-looking man opined that "there was no money about"; his own seemed very safe in his pocket when "Six rows of two-year old poplars, about seven hundred," was made over to him well under the sovereign. Think of the labour of planting those poplars; think of the mere stretching of the accurate line; of the mere making of the holes. Seven hundred poplars!

"Now then, gentlemen, have a little courage. Come, I'm here to sell them. Any bid you like will buy 'em. No reserve. They've got to go. Don't let's be here all day. Thank you, sir, two shillings; two shillings I'm bid; half-a-crown—half-a-crown in two places. Now, Mr. Jones, eighty-five chestnuts, four to six feet high, three shillings—it's against you. Four, may I say? Five—five and six; well, you're going to make me work, I can see. Going at five and six. Any advance on five and six? Are you all done?" Pong! The dull stroke of the



William Reid.

LEAVING LONDON FOR THE SEASON.

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hammer upon the book. "Geoffreys?—E. Geoffreys? Thank you." Eighty-five chestnuts had found a new home.

I was not buying trees, so I moved off over that obstinate clay and looked about me. The Overcoats were growing in eagerness, the keen joy of getting something for nothing was entering into their souls. But the melancholy of the business obscured my natural love of a bargain. Who did it all belong to? Who had put in all this fruitless labour? The ground was about ten acres, an eight-roomed empty red villa stood in the corner—all new, never occupied. Five long tomato-houses stood beside it. Who, with all the hope that gardens require and absorb, had made this place, and was parting with it to-day? I would ask. A tall man, an Overcoat, contemplated with disapproval and reserve the scant purple leafage of "Lot 22. Five rows of privet, about 650." Him I approached, but he also had a question seething within him.

"Nice stuff?" he enquired, tentatively.

"Capital," said I, with much fervour, hoping to egg him on to purchase.

"Ever pizen stock, d'ye know?"

"Cows? Never," said I, with happy firmness; "not like yew for that."

"Ha-a-a-h!" said the Overcoat; and I felt that dark tragedy concerning the fate of heavy milkers was present with him.

"Why is all this being sold? Some failure, I suppose?" I enquired.

A bitter turn of the lip took his hard face.

"There's the gentleman," he replied, with distressing plainness, pointing over his shoulder. My glance passed to a slight man of about thirty, with a pleasant fresh face and a hopeful blue eye, which even on this doleful occasion remained unclouded. I begged his pardon for thus openly discussing his affairs, and said that I could not help being sorry to see so much good work coming to so little.

"I've done it all in the twelvemonth," the young owner told me, with never a shadow on his face; "built that villa and all; put up those glass-houses. Now the landlord claims them." He spoke as though fate, who could not be questioned, had been at work.

"But did you put in *nails* instead of *screws*?" I cried, showing off my only bit of knowledge.

"Ay, and mortised all the plates to the bricks," said the young man, his blue eye still undimmed by his misfortune.

I knew that eye. It is the eye of the believer, the enthusiast, the fanatic all the world over. The man who heads "movements" has that eye. This man had made four thousand briars into roses in a year. This man was eating the leek of failure, like many others who believe in something besides a cheque-book.

"Lot eighty-one. One row budded briars, Gloria Dijon, in dormant bud, about fifty," cried the little auctioneer, with the lisp and the brown gaiters. How often auctioneers have a lisp! The whole of this being, who looked so coldly on the mere vegetable things before him, spelled horses. I could picture the zeal that would replace his spleen in another environment. "Forty! Forty guineas I'm bid; there's a horse, gentlemen, four legs to him, and don't know how to put a foot wrong, I'll warrant. Topped like a billiard-table. Run him up again. . . . Well known to hounds in this neighbourhood, and a genuine sale. Forty-one? Shall I say forty-two for you, sir? Why, he's cheap at sixty. . . . It's right. Forty-three? Come, gentlemen, this fine young hunter . . . and you can put him in the plough if you like . . . rising six, and with all his work before him, why—"

How brisk he would be; how his patter would improve and his repartee develop. Instead, he knocked down "One ditto, ditto, Reen Maria Henrietta, about forty," to me for 2s. 6d. And again—I didn't want them, but one can't leave roses in the cold—another "ditto, ditto, ditto, to name" for 2s. The blood in me was rising, and after, eight standard apples, full of fruit-spurs, for 8s., nine standard Sultan and Victoria plums came my way for a "crown." "Six double thorns, various," I had for 4s., and a mixed row of Guelder rose and Mahonia—about fifty—for the same sum. Conscious that I must pause somewhere, and wondering where these things were to go when I got them home, I strolled away, only returning to prevent an Overcoat from netting a few million of "Enfield Market" cabbage plants for 1s. 6d. Him I ran up to 3s. 6d.—and left in resentful fury, with his incredible bargain.

Still, the auctioneer thumbed his book, rubbed his purple hands, and proceeded to disperse indifferently what had been the hope of the sanguine young nurseryman, wondering the while why money was "so tight" up our way.

A dark, stout man, apparently ubiquitous, interested me. I overheard him in sarcastic conversation: "Well, if you want oats to come up, you don't put in beans, do you?" he enquired, and a servile listening group answered his snarl with a laugh. That man was the landlord, the man who was foreclosing, who had ordered the sale, who had got the greenhouses. Him I felt surely God would deal with, in His own good time, for he looked a hater of his poorer fellow-man; but, awaiting that good time and the greater punishment, I dealt with him myself.

It was half-an-hour later, and I had cheerfully lost my head and "stood in" with an Overcoat in the matter of an odd thousand of rhododendrons for which I had no manner of use.

"Yes, and I don't envy the person who comes into possession of this empty clay field with that hideous villa in the corner of it. How does he expect it will ever let—without even a road to it?" Talking thus warmly to the friendly Overcoat, I suddenly perceived the landlord hovering near. I suffered an immediate flux of venom. "And never a foot of frontage to it!" I added, savagely. I knew what frontage meant to a man of his kidney! His complexion faded somewhat; so I chuckled

and wildly nodded for "fifty geraniums, various, in pots," at 1s. 6d. "Quantity of 'Cuba japonica,'" cried the auctioneer, cheering up as he neared the end of his list. "Oh! yes, *they're* there, though you mayn't see 'em. *They're* all right." (The frost had got every single aucuba of them.) "Give me a bid, gentlemen, if it's only— Thank you, one shilling. One shilling. Any advance on one shilling. Well, it is a cold day. Pong."

And then we tailed off home; some of us in glee; some saddened by having bought the wrong thing, because it was cheap; myself, with many hints about my roses from the gallant-eyed, broken owner. And the last figure I saw was the raptorial landlord, who, "within seven working days" would come into possession of his clay field and his villa (and the ghosts of so many dead hopes) when all the dormant-budded garden stuff had been cleared away.

MENIE MURIEL NORMAN.

KITTY ASTHORE.

ON the receipt of the excellent portrait, by Messrs. Chancellor of Dublin, of Mr. McEnnery's red Irish setter, Kitty Asthore, by Champion Charleville Phil out of Selina (breeder, Mr. F. Moore), the writer determined to take advantage of the good nature of his friend, Major J. K. Millner of the King's Royal Rifles, and of Barnageeha, Belfast, and to find out in a general way what Major Millner's views on the Irish setter were. It is hardly necessary to mention that Major Millner, in addition to being a very famous rifle shot—he was the first man to make a "possible" with the old match-rifle at 1,000 yds.—is universally known as one of the most successful breeders and one of the most discriminating judges of his favourite breed. These are his notes:

"The red Irish setter is one of the most interesting varieties of the dog; it is not only the best for all-round shooting, but is also a charming companion, and for beauty is second to none. Its origin is prehistoric, but it has no doubt been developing at the same time that the gun has been used for shooting game and was forming into the 'two-shooter.' That the Irish setter is a great favourite is shown by the large number of them that are used for shooting, and by the well-filled classes at the principal dog shows, and it holds its own at the field trials all over the country. The Irish setter should be made like a good hunter. It is a trifle longer in the leg than other setters, with a straight-cut long nose, blunt at the muzzle, and with a well-developed eyebrow. The eye should not be light, but should be full of expression. The colour of the coat should not be too dark, but as bright a red as possible. Irish setters have not degenerated as much as other sporting breeds by being exhibited. Many of the best at our shows are also first-class workers. Mr. McEnnery's Kitty Asthore is one of them. She did well at the Irish Red Setter Club's field trials last August, and she won the championship at the late Belfast Show."

They are very brief notes, but very much to the point,



Chancellor and Son.

KITTY ASTHORE.

Dublin.

and the writer, before making a single observation upon them desires to make good his claim to be heard in such distinguished company. To begin with, he has Major Millner's leave to embroider and "improve" Major Millner's language; but he will attempt only to improve the occasion. To go on with, he has shot over Irish setters and loved them not a little, but he would not dream of setting himself as a judge of "points," of which he thinks, to tell the truth, very little. To end up with, Major Millner once caused him to win a momentary triumph. Rather less than a year ago, when Queen Victoria was in Ireland, and there was a great horse, cattle, and dog show in the splendid grounds of Ball's Bridge, the writer was standing with some friends near the ring in which a lot of setters were being paraded before Major Millner as judge. One of them seemed so good in every way that the writer, having first expatiated on Major Millner's excellence as a judge, pointed out that particular dog as far the best in the ring. A wave of the judge's hand; the dog was led out; and a torrent of chaff began to flow as if a thrashing machine had been at work. Yet that dog got first prize eventually, having been ordered out of the ring first simply because there was no room for doubt about him at all. That, in a small way, is a justification for a word or two of comment on Major Millner's notes upon a very typical specimen of a magnificent breed. The phrase "like a good hunter" is the one which really carries most meaning; it gives one the whole idea of quality, without entering into unnecessary detail. The other phrases speak for themselves, especially that about the long legs, which reminds one that General Hutchinson was once unkind enough to write that, "it is the general paucity of game in Ireland (snipe and woodcock excepted) that makes dogs trained in that country show so much untiring energy and indomitable zeal when hunted on our side of the Channel. But the slight wiry Irish setter (whom it is so difficult to see on the moor on account of his colour) is naturally a dog of great pace and endurance." That is what one wants, and it could not be put better. Major Millner's remarks about degeneracy will rouse an echo of agreement in many hearts, but it is only fair to say that degeneracy does not come so much from exhibition as from bad judging and consequent efforts on the part of breeders to follow false lines and to reach wrong results. In judging a dog, as in the case of a horse, it is the general aspect which matters most, and the points, unless they involve really serious defects, are of minor importance. Even Kitty Asthore has a fault, as there are a few white hairs running through her coat. But that has very properly not been allowed to interfere with her success.

AT THE THEATRE.

WE are grateful to Mrs. Patrick Campbell for her plucky revival of "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith" at the Royalty Theatre. Those who decry the actor-managers, and therefore, of course, the actress-managers, lose sight of the fact that these alone attempt the artistic, though there may be grave chances that commercial success will not follow. "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith," we believe, was not a financial success when Mr. Hare produced it at the Garrick Theatre; yet here we see Mrs. Campbell willing to risk its reproduction for the sake of representing the most serious work of our foremost dramatist.

Mr. Pinero took a disagreeable and ugly subject, and beautified it, and almost justified his choice of it by the superlative excellence of his treatment of it. The exposition and the development of the argument; the presentation of the characters, and the laying bare, by the perfect choice of word and phrase, their motives, their sentiments, and their emotions; the graphic but perfectly natural language, warm and animated, yet apparently never unusual—all these are masterly, and one can see why Mr. Pinero is, beyond all question, the leader among living English playwrights. The author who can give us "Dandy Dick," "Sweet Lavender," "The Gay Lord Quex," and "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith," is an author of premier rank, and unequalled in his art and craft to-day.

The gradual descent in the mental status of Mrs. Ebbsmith, from the Free Woman, disregarding marriage laws and ritual for the sake of principle; glorying in her companionship with a man untrammelled by anything more binding than mutual inclination; her descent from this, by gradual stages, to a mere mistress consenting to share him with his legal wife; a descent which makes absolutely no material or external difference, but which debases her mentally until she can hardly bear the agony of it; the descent, the beginning of which was the springing into activity of her latent love, brought forth by the danger of losing him; the descent which increases in velocity in ratio to the loosing of the mental restraint she had hitherto imposed upon herself—this is shown with a strength and a grace positively exquisite. Nothing, seemingly, is said or done for a reason, yet

everything is unobtrusively carrying the action forward, illuminating the characters of the people of the drama, impelling the inevitable climax.

Only less fine, less flawless, less absolutely convincing, is the character of Lucas Cleeve. Compared with Agnes Ebbsmith he is a commonplace egotist, an ordinary sensualist; compared with her, his shades of thought, his casuistry, his vanity are crude. One sometimes has a remote feeling that he himself must know his own selfishness, his own weakness, they are so palpable; and that, of course, detracts from the value of the character very considerably. But in any ordinary play, contrasted with any other character less minutely, less irresistibly drawn than Agnes Ebbsmith, Lucas Cleeve would seem to be a marvel of subtlety, of fine gradations of mental attitudes.

In a play of such delicacy, such justifiable pretension, we do not see how the Bible incident is to be defended. At the time the drama was first represented it aroused a storm of controversy. But, while in all other respects "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith" comes triumphantly to the stage again, while its disagreeable and ugly theme seems more completely hidden by the beauty of the workmanship than was the case originally, this one part of it appears even more unworthy and trivial and obvious, and, we must say it, clatrapy. Mrs. Ebbsmith, it seems to us, if she had thrown the Bible into the fire, would have thrown it in as an ordinary book which irritated her, and which she wanted to burn; she would be above attaching any allegorical or ethical significance to mere ink and paper. She is not of the type which confuses the spirit with the printed letter. She would not have burned her arm severely in dragging it out again in a moment of terrified remorse. Mr. Pinero, we presume, wished to show us quickly and strikingly that in women of the type of Agnes the infidelity and the unconventionality are merely skin-deep; that, lower down, the old faiths, the old ingrained impulses remain, and the most effective and rapid way of bringing it home to us was by symbol. But the symbol might, surely, have been less crude, different.

But, despite this, the thought comes to us: How far in advance of all our native dramatists is Mr. Pinero! "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith" returns to us after years, absolutely unaged, dealing with a more daring subject in a more modern spirit than any other has reached to-day!

Of the performance at the Royalty Theatre it is difficult to speak too highly. Mrs. Campbell's interpretation of Agnes we know; it is a very beautiful work of art. It is so simple, so strong; it expresses so much without apparent means; it is so comprehensive without any visible effort; it is instinct with that feminine passion which modern anæmia can only disguise and not obliterate; one can feel the pulsation of humanity through the black garb of austerity, mentality, and restraint. Mrs. Campbell sends the rays of her personality quivering over the footlights.

Mr. Courtenay Thorpe's Lucas Cleeve is a remarkably clever piece of work. The deceptive strength, the real weakness of the man, are shown by numberless thoughtful and natural little touches. The delightfully drawn character of Mrs. Cleeve, so sweet, so simple, so true—how piercingly poignant are her casual references to the little child who died!—receives full expression at the hands of that very winsome and sensitive actress, Miss Winifred Fraser. The creation of senile vice and shrewd common-sense, the Duke of St. Olpherts—originally played by Mr. John Hare—is vivified by Mr. George Arliss with quite extraordinary observation and humour. In every respect, "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith" is an artistic delight to those who do not go to the theatre merely to be amused, and who are old enough to be able to watch human nature dissected without taking harm thereby.

IN spite of several excellent ideas, a few of which come to a proper fruition, and language which is sometimes good and never merely commonplace, Mr. Gilbert Murray's "Andromache," is not a play for the stage. It lacks the variety, the development of character, the concentration necessary for success in an acting drama. His prose tragedy, represented recently by the Stage Society, at a morning performance at the Garrick Theatre, is tame, mechanical, quite uninspiring. In reading the play one discovers many latent possibilities which do not "carry" over the footlights. While nothing could make "Andromache" a strong piece, it would have been made far more interesting and impressive had it been acted and mounted more adequately. As it was, it was deadly dull and tame. The only performer acting with the dignity and style of classicism was Miss Edyth Olive, who portrayed the character of the eponymous heroine. Miss Janet Achurch, a remarkably clever actress in her *genre*, failed to invest the part of Hermione with any distinction or interest.

THOSE living in the country who are addicted to melodrama uncompromising and unabashed, will find much to interest and amuse them in a play which is about to be sent on tour, and which was performed at the Theatre

Métropole, Camberwell, recently, entitled "Old Scores," by Messrs. Alfred Robbins and Paul Morris. While it proceeds along conventional lines, there are yet new ideas in the piece, and the language is superior to the ordinary language of country melodrama. Among the company are some clever people, Messrs. Philip Cunningham, Stephen Ewart, P. L. Julian, Richard Purdon, Miss Adeline Bourne, and Miss Mabel Dent.

IN autumn Mr. Tree will probably produce not another Shakespearean revival, but a new play of rather a novel kind—a drama founded by Mr. Stephen Phillips, on the subject of Ulysses—a very promising theme. Mr. Tree is a great believer in novelty—wise men—and generally manages to strike the imagination by a particularly beautiful and ingenious scene, or the engagement of an actor or actress of quite an unexpected and daring kind. Surely, Mr. Tree, your next Shakespearean production will be "The Merchant of Venice." Your Shylock should be an intensely interesting performance, and, unless one is very much mistaken, in Miss Brayton there is a potential Portia of uncommon promise.

Mr. George Alexander will be the next manager to exchange modernity for poetic romance, and will positively produce "Paolo and Francesca," by Mr. Stephen Phillips, at the St. James's Theatre in the autumn. He himself should be a more than acceptable hero—he has many of the qualities necessary to the

character—and Miss Fay Davis will surely make an ideal Francesca. Though "Herod" was written long after "Paolo and Francesca," it was fortunate enough to secure the first production; it will be very interesting to compare its acting qualities with Mr. Phillips's earlier play.

The announcement that Mr. Fergus Hume had written a blank verse play which is to be produced by Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum came upon us as a great surprise. It is no disrespect to say that the idea of Mr. Hume writing a blank verse play never occurred to one. The author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab" gave to the world a very clever detective story, which he has never quite equalled since; but nothing he has written hitherto has prepared us for the ambitious and most difficult task in all literature—the writing of a poetic tragedy—a good poetic tragedy, that is. It is very often the unexpected that happens, and this may prove to be Mr. Hume's proper *métier*. We shall all welcome his success very heartily, for his own sake and for Sir Henry Irving's.

The following theatres will shortly all be relying on frivolous "musical comedies" for their staple attractions: The Gaiety, Daly's, Lyric, Apollo, Shaftesbury, and Adelphi; while the elevated drama is only always to be found at Her Majesty's, the St. James's, Haymarket, Wyndham's, and Royalty. Legitimate light opera has only one permanent habitation, the Savoy, while farce is generally to be found at the Criterion, Vaudeville, Strand, and Terry's. It is not a list for London to be proud of. When one counts also the many music halls, the merely frivolous simply swamps every other form of theatrical entertainment combined.

PHŒBUS.

THE BUILDING BYE-LAWS.

V.—COTTAGE AND OTHER WINDOWS.

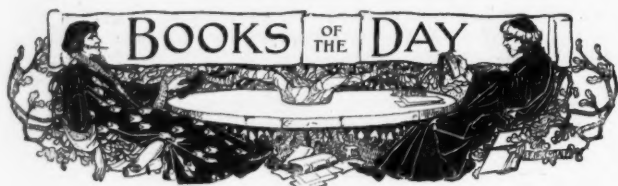
AS far as regards what one may call the expression of a house, there is nothing of more importance than the windows, and from the time when glass was first invented, architects have strained their ingenuity to give variety and beauty to them. If there were no bye-laws excepting those relating to this feature, they alone would be sufficient to ruin English buildings from an artistic point of view; and they have not the excuse of being useful either. We refer particularly to the bye-law that provides that the total area of the window of a habitable room "shall be equal at the least to one-tenth of the floor area of such a room." The absurdity of this rule is self-apparent; why should the area of a window be proportioned to the amount of flooring alone? Surely there are many other points to be considered. Let us take one as an example. It is, of course, a general principle not open to controversy that the office of a window is to admit light. Make it too small and you have darkness, too large and it will make the room in certain weather too cold. But, obviously, to light a room adequately you must consider its capacity as well as its floor area. In the room where this was discussed there were two windows that just about fulfilled the Local Government Board's requirements as to size, and lighted it well, but the height of the ceiling was about 12ft. Would it be right to have the same windows in a room only 8ft. high? One need but ask the question to show that the framers of this bye-law acted on a ridiculous principle. Had the ceiling of the room in question been a few feet lower, the windows would have come to the floor and been absolutely wrong. Yet the bye-laws pay no heed to anything except the floor area. Further, the same iron rule is applied to all sizes of houses—it would apply to Chatsworth if it were to be built over again, and it applies to the smallest cottage. Again, it is obviously drawn up without the special knowledge that architects could have supplied. The difference between a well-lighted and ill-lighted room is explained in no such plain and simple way as might be inferred from the bye-laws. Take two rooms of exactly the same floor area but different height of ceiling, give them similar windows, and it will at once be seen that the effects produced are different. Where the bye-laws are wrong is in applying the same rule to various classes of houses. They are in every respect too sweeping, and would not have been so if building experts—that is to say, architects—had been called into consultation when they were drawn up.

Nor was there any need for ruling out the overhanging window, such as some of our early architects delighted in, and fine specimens of which are familiar to all of us who have happened to pass High Holborn, and that may also be seen at Chester. In the latter town the very sensible course has been taken of refusing to adopt the bye-laws at all. Were they in force there, the inevitable result would be the gradual obliteration of all that is most characteristic in the famous town. The bye-laws do not indeed enjoin the speedy and complete destruction of all that is not in accordance with them, but they get applied to rebuilding, as was seen in the case of our correspondent who was obliged to conform to their plans or suspend operations as soon as he began to give washhouses to the cottages, because these involved a new foundation. Thus the operation of the bye-laws is always towards a dull uniform level, and one trusts it will be long before they are adopted in the town of Chester. But the example tells in a third way. The bye-laws get adopted by local authorities simply because the members know nothing about the matter. Some of our correspondents have said very hard things about the local butcher and the baker and

the grocer and the undertaker meeting to adopt building bye-laws. Of course they do not mean any disrespect to these tradesmen as tradesmen. Nor is it advanced that they are not the most fit and competent persons to look after local interests and perform most of the duties for which they were chosen. Only it is very certain that men who have businesses of their own that demand close attention and diligent work can have neither leisure nor opportunity to learn even the rudiments of building and architecture. Nor is it possible that they can really understand these bye-laws, which in character are extremely technical. The writer is speaking frankly from his own experience. It would have taken him an age to make out their meaning but that experts of various sorts very kindly explained what seemed obscure. Well, it is merely absurd to say that the average District Council is able to arrive at an intelligent decision as to whether they should be adopted or not. Among the members there very likely may be a builder, a surveyor, or other official who has a glimmering of what they mean, and the others are bound by their own ignorance to follow his advice implicitly. That in itself is quite wrong. The Local Government Board must surely recognise one principle clearly. If the responsibility for adopting bye-laws is to rest on any local body, then the regulations must be drawn up in such a way that the ordinary and average member of that body, be he butcher, baker, tailor, or grocer, may fairly be expected to understand them. If not, the whole performance becomes farce or red-tape, and the example of Chester shows very well what is likely to happen elsewhere. Let local bodies fully understand that these are not wise, but foolish, regulations, that without ensuring health or safety they obstruct the provision of wholesome cottages for labouring men, and they will refuse altogether to adopt them. Thus the undoing of the Local Government Board is its own act.

But in regard to windows there are many points not shrouded in technicality at all, the ignorance of which must be apparent to anybody, as, for instance, the regulation demanding large windows in closets. It is merely common-sense to say that, when a gale of wind is blowing straight at it, the big window has to be closed and the place is insanitary, while a little window may be kept partly open and act always as a ventilator. Again, it is a moot question how much the light of a house depends on reflection from the roof. In Scotland and in some English localities they have fixed the minimum height of ceilings at more than in London, which is quite against the latest hygienic teaching, as well as adverse to the efficient lighting of the room. Again, a bow window gives no more light than can be obtained from a straight one, that is, from the size of the hole in the wall, but for the purpose of calculating his tenth of the flooring a builder may measure all round it, which is another absurdity. We point out these details, not so much for insistence on a few special points, as to show that the case for a thorough revision of the bye-laws is overpowering. One more may be added, and that is, the insistence upon large windows for bedrooms. In this you have to consider, not theoretically but practically, the needs of a cottage; the inmates, it may be assumed, will always be more or less pinched for room. A labourer is towards the bottom rung of the ladder, and has not the wherewithal to pay for more than the accommodation absolutely necessary. It might reasonably be demanded that at least one bedroom should be of a superior character, that is to say, comfortable, well lighted, and fitted with a fireplace, so that it would serve in case of illness; but this is not at all necessary throughout. Country children spend very little time in their sleeping apartment; they

creep up to bed at dusk and rise at dawn, so that really the size of the windows is of very little consequence—they do not need light to sleep by. Nor is it required for ventilation; our experience of country cottages is that they are much too freely ventilated. Therefore, to press this upon them and force them to have large windows is only to contract the convenience of the place and obstruct building altogether; and it is a provision that tends to defeat the general intention of the bye-laws. It is just the same here as elsewhere; regulations that may be wise and reasonable when applied to the houses of a large town, become absurd and tyrannical when applied to country cottages. One hopes that till some pains are taken to amend them, with the help of those who are qualified to do so, District Councils will be chary of adopting the bye-laws. To ignore them is the very best rebuke that can be administered to the Local Government Board.



MANY reviews of "The Sacred Fount," by Henry James (Methuen), have already appeared, and many of the reviewers have confessed more or less frankly that, in spite of their admiration for the style and playful elaboration of Mr. Henry James, they have been bored, that they have then taken to skipping, and that at the end they have been almost annoyed to find that Mr. James was trifling with them. My attitude towards the book is somewhat different to that. It cannot be read at a sitting, or even at two or three sittings. Every sentence requires to be thought over, not laboriously but in a leisurely way, before it can be appreciated, and although the book never becomes really tedious, it is still true that a little of it goes a long way. In fact, the process of reading all these latest-born books of Mr. Henry James can be likened to nothing so aptly as to the process of drinking the most exquisite claret after dinner. A few glasses sipped quietly are delightful; and in drinking them one gets the whole benefit of the bouquet, rolling the dainty liquor with the tongue. One feels—to quote Oliver Wendell Holmes—that the grapes, from which the divine drink was pressed, have drunk the splendour of the sun. But if too many glasses be consumed the delicacy of flavour is lost, the palate ceases to appreciate, and the brain whirls. My experience with "The Sacred Fount" has been precisely this. But I have had the sense to lay it down as often as I seemed to be losing zest for it, and the next time it has been taken up it has been as full of delight as ever. Nor, strictly, is it right to say that Mr. James is trifling with the reader, save in that playful and open way which is traditionally his own. He has evolved a whimsical theory of psychology and has worked it out thoroughly. That is all. He seems to have said to himself: "In sensational fiction will be found the expedient known as vampyrism, in which one person sucks the life blood out of another. Let me see how that would work out if there were such a thing as mental vampyrism." And then he does it, giving to his stage very narrow limits, according to his custom, and satisfying himself with two or three days at a country house in which to work out his story, such as it is, and his theory. He is himself the narrator, the person who tries to make all sorts of simple things fit in with his theory, who neglects the obvious explanation of nine-tenths of them. And at the end he does not so much confess to having fooled the reader as point out that he has himself been fooled.

To be taken as a whole, the book cannot be recommended, but in homeopathic doses it is delightful, and some sketches of feminine character with which it abounds are among the finest things Mr. Henry James has ever done. So are some of the pieces of self-analysis, of cheerfully remorseless exposure by the narrator of the way in which he has fooled himself.

"It little mattered to me now that Mrs. Briss had put it to me—that I had even whimsically put it to myself—that I was perhaps in love with her (Mrs. Server). That was as good a name as another for an interest springing up in an hour, and moreover was a decent working hypothesis. The sentiment had not indeed asserted itself at 'first sight,' though it might have taken its place remarkably well among the phenomena of what is known as second. The real fact was, none the less, that I was quite too sorry for her to be anything but sorry. This odd feeling was something that I may as well say I shall not even now attempt to account for—partly, it is true, because my recital of the rest of what I was to see in no small measure does so. It was a force that I at this stage simply found I had already succumbed to. If it was not the result of what I had granted to myself was the matter with her, then it was rather the very cause of my making that concession. It was a different thing from my first impulse to shield her. I had already shielded her—fought for her so far as I could, or as the case immediately required. My own sense of how I was affected had practically cleared up, in short, in the presence of this deeper vision of her. My divinations and inductions had finally brought home to me that in the whole, huge, brilliant, crowded place I was the only person save one who was in anything that could be called a relation to her. The other person's relation was concealed, and mine, so far as she herself was concerned, was unexpressed; so that I suppose what most, at the juncture in question, stirred within me was the wonder of how I might successfully express it. I felt that so long as I didn't express it I should be haunted with the idea of something infinitely touching and tragic in her loveliness—possibly in her torment, in her terror. If she was 'nervous' to the tune I had come to recognise, it could only be because she had grounds. And what might her grounds more naturally be than that, arranged and arrayed, disguised and decorated, pursuing in vain through our careless company her search for the right shade of apparent security, she felt herself none the less all the while the restless victim of fear and failure?"

In the case of Mr. Henry James, of whose style I have been accustomed to be told for many years that it is perfect and without flaw, it may perhaps be worth while to point to one or two howling errors. Of the first of them

there is no doubt. He tells us once that somebody was not "too depressed" to do something or other. He ought, of course, to have written "too much depressed." As to the second I have no doubt in my own mind. Mr. James speaks of the supposititious insanity of one of his characters, using "supposititious" in the sense of "supposed." An old but very complete edition of "Johnson" (1785) does recognise this use by quotation (from Woodward, whosoever he was) as an alternative; but there is no doubt that the proper use, sustained by quotations from Addison and Bacon, is in the sense of "not genuine—put by a trick into the place or character belonging to another."

In "The Siege of Kumassi" (Pearson) will be found a bright, spirited, and straightforward account by Lady Hodgson of sufferings and adventures in the cause of Empire which, at a time when the public mind was very much pre-occupied by other matters, were taken almost as a matter of course. It was in consequence of purely fortuitous circumstances that Lady Hodgson, whose portrait shows her to be a typical young Englishwoman, accompanied her husband, the Governor of the Gold Coast, from Accra into Ashanti, and it need hardly be said that this expedition would never have been made by her with her husband's consent if there had been the slightest idea of the trouble which was going to be encountered in Ashanti. How Sir Frederick and Lady Hodgson journeyed to Kumassi, how they entered it in state, how the storm of rebellion gathered and broke, how splendidly the garrison defended themselves, how well the Hausas fought, how at one time all hope seemed lost, and how the escape to the coast was made at last, how terrible were the adventures and how great the sufferings of the escaping column, and yet how splendidly the whole thing was managed, may be read with very great profit and advantage in Lady Hodgson's pages. But on the whole the two features most striking to one who is a stranger to Ashanti are the admirable account given of the ceremonies and polity of Ashanti and the unconscious sketch which Lady Hodgson draws of her own character. Here, for example, is one of the preliminary ceremonies before the rebellion broke out:

"Without any delay the kings and chiefs formed into procession, and with their Court officials and followers walked past the fort to salute afresh the Governor, who stood upon the verandah bowing graciously to each as they defiled before him. The procession took more than an hour to pass by, and was indeed a gay and brilliant sight, an impressive display of barbaric grandeur. The kings, dressed in multi-coloured and gaudy robes of silk or velvet, and decked with solid gold ornaments of native workmanship in such profusion as to excite one's envy, were carried by in palanquins.

"Each wore his crown of beaten gold and had his state umbrella held over him. On either side walked the Court officials, carrying as their badges of office handsomely designed sticks or swords overlaid with gold, and around were pages in attendance, whose duty it was to wave enormous fans. Men followed behind bearing the kings' symbols of wealth and power in the shape of small boxes of native workmanship studded profusely with brass nails, or else big bunches of enormous keys. The boxes were supposed to be filled with gold dust and other valuables, but I imagine that they had nothing of the sort inside them, for one fell into our hands later, and contained the most wonderful collection of rubbish I ever saw—old brass buttons, copper wire, a tag end of gold lace, and other trifles, and we searched in vain for anything of value. The glitter of the golden sticks of the linguists, for that is the title of the Court officials carrying them, was quite dazzling.

"The once dreaded executioners were in the procession, walking with sombre and staid demeanour, as if to emphasise the fact that their ancient glory had departed at the command of the queen before whose representative they were now defiling. The office of executioner is hereditary, so that in a great procession numbers of them would take part, some grey-headed and soon to enter the great unknown whither they had with such grim relish despatched hundreds, or perhaps even thousands, of victims, others lads and boys in their novitiate.

"Then there were the Court criers. Each of these important personages wore cap made of the fur of the long-haired black monkey, which gave them a very fierce appearance quite befitting their position. On their bare breasts were handsome badges of fine beaten gold hung round the neck with pure white cords."

More even than that description I like to enjoy the busine-slike account given by Lady Hodgson of the fighting, the restraint which she shows in describing scenes of carnage, the light tone in which she speaks of her sufferings, and the merry spirit in which from beginning to end her sense of humour is maintained. It is by the sons of such women that empires are made. In a word, the book is not only interesting as a modest record of adventure, but also as a picture of the kind of life which is led in those parts of Africa by English men and women to whom the nation does not always give due gratitude.

ON THE GREEN.

SO Harry Vardon is not going to pitch his tent permanently in America after all. That, at least, is the latest news that we hear of him. He is to play a match—a match, we presume, of the style described as "friendly"—with Jack White, at Seaford, on April 7th, and to take part in all the bigger operations of the British golfing year. So that, if it be correct, is all very much as it should be, although it makes a good deal of previous news incorrect. But Vardon's permanent abode appears as hard to locate as the elusive De Wet himself, who has once more cleared that great bunker, the Orange River in flood, which we hoped would be too long a "carry" for him. Taylor and White, of course, have arranged their match comfortably—not a match of the kind called "friendly" this, because there is something like £100 staked on it; but that is by no means to say that the men are not the very best of friends. They are that, and they are good sportsmen, both; so that there was not the least fear but that the proviso of Taylor that the green of White's selection should be in the South would be met favourably. We understand that their campaign opens on May 18th with the first part of the match, to be played at Seaford. With this and the Vardon match, Seaford is looking up as an arena of great contests.

Mr. Howarth, the Cambridge University player of note, has lost nothing of his form, apparently, in the winter of the golfer's discontent. Last year he was the winner of the Linskill Cup for the best scratch score, and this year he wins it again, after tying, at eighty-two, with Mr. Bodkin. The day was abominably stormy, and altogether against low scoring.

About this time of year there is generally rather more activity in golf on the Continent than at home, in Pau, Biarritz, and Cannes. It is about the season for the chief competitions at Pau and Biarritz, and also for the competitions between these two Pyrenean clubs, so to speak of them—the foursomes and the team matches. This year, although the competitions and the golf in general proceed at both these places, there does not seem to be the same zest about them as usual, the fact being that there has been a nipping “frost,” even in the literal sense, a frost long continued, with snow on the ground. We can do as well as this without crossing the Channel to find it. Cannes, where it has been cold too, if less cold, has been further depressed by the mourning into which the death of our late Queen has thrown so many Courts—a mourning that is felt peculiarly at Cannes, where the Grand Duke Michael is so much the heart and soul of all that goes forward.

Colonel Elliot Lockhart, the secretary of the Royal and Ancient Club, whose appointment dates but from the other day, has already resigned that post, which we presume will now be open for another candidate on similar terms; unless, indeed, the rumour that we hear be true, to the intent that there is a disposition on the part of many leading members to return to the old methods of honorary secretaryship, with paid staff of clerks. This would be a curious step to the retrograde on the part of the premier club at a time when all other large clubs seem to be finding paid secretaries essential to their comfortable conduct.

In the foursome match above mentioned, shortly due to take place between Pau and Biarritz, the former, with Mr. Hutchings, Mr. Hutchinson, and so on, seems to have the better chance, for it is not obvious whom Biarritz will have to match this pair.

RACING NOTES.

It not infrequently happens in racing, as in other matters, that the best-appointed and most comfortable courses are not the best suited and the most practical for the purposes for which they exist. Most people who read these words will imagine I am referring to Ascot and the disgraceful state of the course there (how often have these words been written, and what absolute futility); but it is too early to talk of Ascot yet. At the moment, however, I am alluding to Sandown, and lamenting the fact that a very simple precaution would have saved the life of Hidden Mystery. In many places less fashionable than Sandown, and considerably less opulent, the guard-rail is banked so as to preclude the possibility of any horse getting his leg between the rail and the ground, with the inevitable result that an awkward accident cannot occur. Now that Mr. H. Brassey has lost a horse for which he gave 3,500 guineas, which, in my opinion, was not a penny too much, the executive may attend to this matter; or, again, they may not. Hidden Mystery was of the type which we could ill afford to lose. Up to any weight, with plenty of staying power and an infinite capacity for jumping, he stood out from among the ruck like a very Cloister. It was not that he failed to jump on this occasion; he did not—he only got too near the guard-rail, and if the rail had been banked up, there are many reasons which make it possible to believe that he might have got over with a scramble, since the Sandown fences are by no means formidable as regards thickness. Instead of which—but let us hope that before the next Sandown Meeting such a thing will have been made impossible.

Sandown Park, like all well-organised and carefully-conducted com-



Sunny Shower. Model. Elliman. Drumcree.
W. A. Rouch. THE LIVERPOOL TRIAL STEEPLECHASE.

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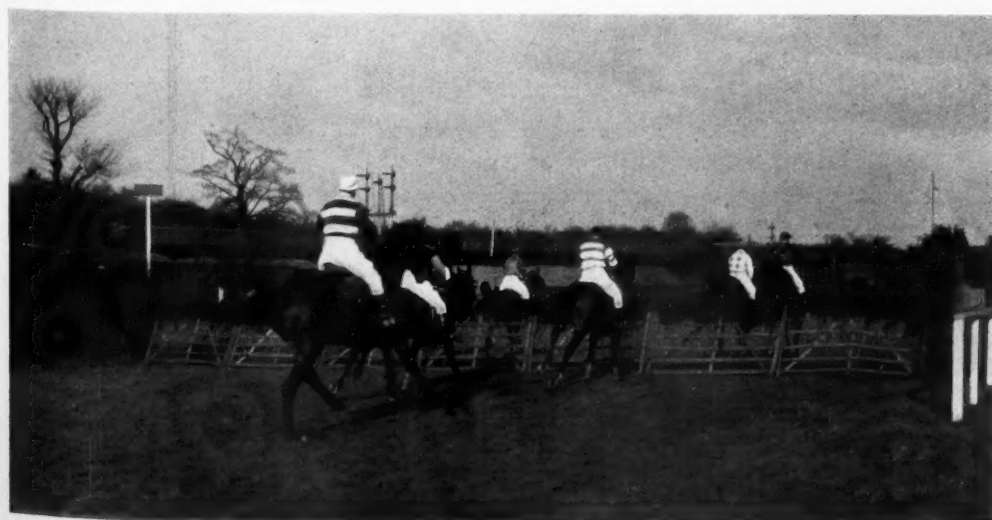
mercial enterprises, is always able to pull itself out of an apparent hole without either financial loss or any important or distressing amount of inconvenience. When the Grand Military Meeting was abandoned for very sufficient reasons, they were able to fill up the gap with a really good day's fixture, and on the principle of giving to those who already own something, they found little difficulty in getting what they wanted. Why do the executive of Sandown and Kempton ignore the Press, both individually and collectively, with the calm superiority of Government officials? Either in the matter of passes or in the matter of information, or in any matter in which they come in contact with journalists, they adopt this attitude, which, when one remembers that they obtain enough gratuitous advertisements in the course of the year to absorb their entire dividends at ordinary rates, is neither grateful nor diplomatic.

In one of the excellent photographs which are to be found on the next page we see the unfortunate Hidden Mystery going strong and well, making the running with County Council. Unfortunately we can only see his head, and we are denied a glimpse of his magnificent shoulders and quarters. In another picture Romanoff, who, by the way, will *not* run in the National unless all those connected with him change their minds, which is unlikely, is jumping in splendid form, and is right out by himself, with no opponent anywhere in the immediate neighbourhood. Mr. Brassey's return on the policeman's horse is more pathetic than it appears; but this question I have already dealt with.

The American method. How often have these words been written, how often have they served as a splendid basis for a heated smoking-room argument in which neither side has ever given way! Like the head of King Charles, which worried Mr. Dick so terribly, “the American method” is ever with us. Gradually conservative prejudice and opinion have disappeared, and I am told on good authority that when M. Cannon begins the forthcoming season at Lincoln he will be found “crouching,” not to any abnormal extent, but still “crouching,” and if “Morny” is converted, who shall hold back? By the time these notes appear seven American jockeys, including the Reiffs and “Cash” Sloan, brother of “Mr.” Tod Sloan, who is no longer with us, will have arrived in England. Never has any sporting innovation met with such extraordinary success as what we used to term the American invasion, and never—and this side of the picture is not so pleasant—has there been so much wrangling, strife, and envy as there has been over our American friends. For which, without being in the least hyper-patriotic, I sincerely believe they are very much to blame. May things and people work more smoothly during the season which is now almost on us.

Encouraged by the open weather, trainers have begun to send their horses along in real earnest, and at present all the Lincoln candidates of any importance are standing their preparations well. Forfarshire, who, like many other good horses, cares nothing for work on tan, has done more than one really satisfactory gallop during the last few days. J. Reiff has been definitely engaged to ride Nightshade, who is thoroughly well and very nearly fit, while Syerla is another certain runner who is in the best of health, and in whom his connections place much confidence, and not without reason.

It was Mr. Spencer Gollan, if I remember right, who first of all introduced us to the Australian Waler of the first class, and for a little time, owing to the success of that good old horse Ebor, he did well enough. But

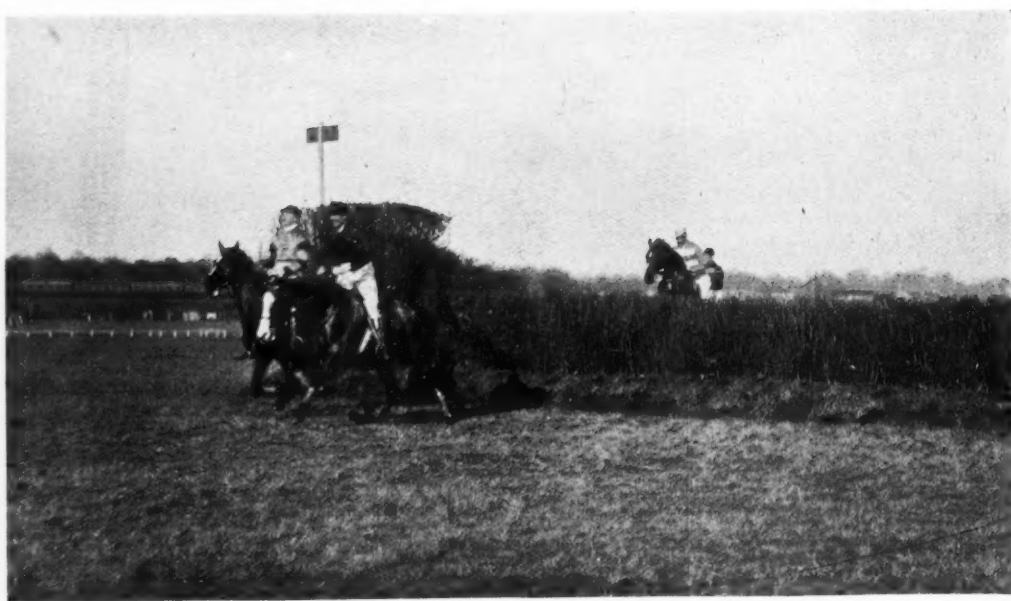


W. A. Rouch.

THE LAMMAS HURDLE RACE.

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Elbor, good horse though he undoubtedly was, was never quite good enough to meet our best steep'echasers, so Daimio appeared, with a dazzling record of wins behind him, and, apparently, every prospect of future success. We can remember what a disappointment he was, how, jumping like the kangaroo of his native country, far over the tops of the fences, he tired himself out and accomplished little or nothing. This year we find Levanter in the National, and for the first time it seems that Australia has provided a candidate who must be taken seriously. The old difficulty of high jumping still stands in the way, but a judicious course of schooling, combined with an occasional hurdle-race to inspire confidence, is doing wonders for the horse, and I shall look forward to seeing him run at Aintree with much interest. The veteran Cathal, who disappointed Mr. "Reggie" Ward so often, has taken a new lease of life, and is at the present time doing real good strong work under Sir Charles Nugent. With no desire to cavil at anybody or anything, it cannot be denied that Sir Charles Nugent understands, perhaps better than anybody else in the world, what a National horse really does need, and with a horse that has "got round" twice, anything may happen, for at Aintree a probation is



Rouch. **HIDDEN MYSTERY AND COUNTY COUNCIL MAKE THE RUNNING.** Copyright

"trial," even when the distance is only two miles and the race for which the horses are supposed to be tried is the National. That the title is a

misnomer is evident, but I very much doubt if it is possible to make up a race which shall be a real trial for the National, even if the distance was the same. Nobody, for instance, would argue that 4½ miles over the hills and valleys and twists and turns of Sandown is the same thing as the great race over the grand, sweeping, straightforward ground at Aintree. And another thing, if a real trial race was arranged, do you think that you would find the owners of National candidates running their horses in it? I doubt it. To descend to the slang of the kerbstone for a moment, "They know too much." BUCEPHALUS.

Correspondence.

TREATMENT OF OAK FOR ORNAMENTAL WORK.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I know for a fact that there is a means of colouring oak, but it is a secret. Some years ago I wrote one of our papers (I forget which) asking for information on the subject, as I am a bit of an amateur cabinet-maker, and wished to stain a mantelpiece and overmantel which I had

made in carved oak. A firm in the North wrote me and sent one sample piece of inch oak. They stated they had found out how to colour oak so that it could be



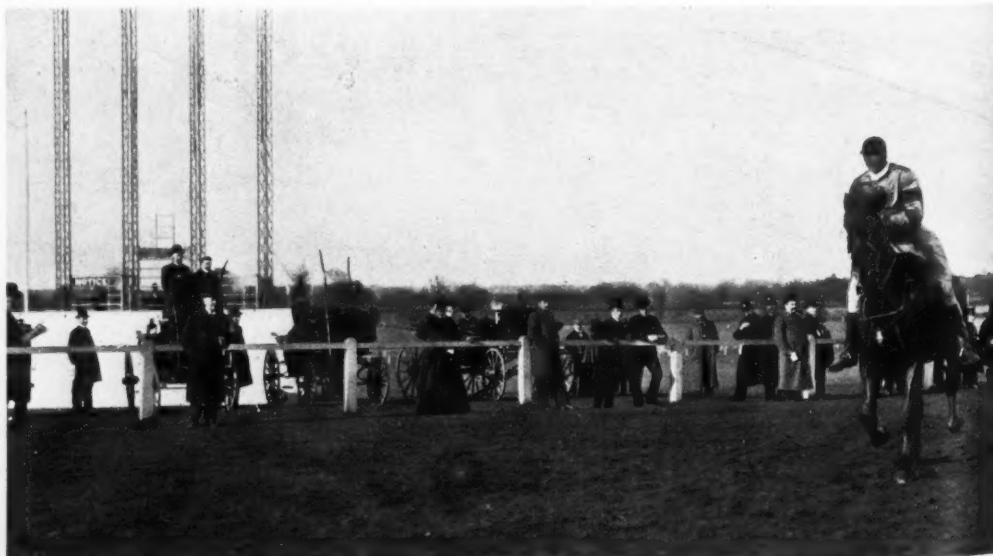
W. A. Rouch.

ROMANOFF JUMPS THE LAST FENCE.

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generally exacted before a horse wins. Of the horses which stand out prominently at the moment as being possessed of a good chance of success, Barsac seems to me to be "out by himself." Whereas other candidates have gained slovenly victories over short distances or fallen down without obvious provocation, Barsac has done neither, and his recent running, more especially in the Great Warwickshire Handicap Steeplechase, goes to show that he is a better horse now than he was last year, when, for one fleeting second, he challenged Ambush II. With only 9st. 13lb. to carry, and a record like this, he must, at any rate, leaving out of consideration the problematic accident, do more than come in with the undistinguished crowd. Mr. Eletsos says, and I think that Mr. Eletsos believes, that Grudon is as good as Barsac, if not better, at the weights; but then Grudon is a little partial to his own comfort, and it is more than probable when the final struggle comes that he will decline to be ridden out to the last ounce. At any rate he has done so before, more than once.

What is a trial steeplechase? Mr. Corlett asks in the *Sporting Times* this week, and the question is not without both pathos and humour. Anything and everything is called



W. A. Rouch.

MR. BRASSEY ON A POLICEMAN'S HORSE.

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worked after it had been treated, but refused to tell me how to do it, or to supply the wood ready coloured. So I was no better off for their information, but rather aggravated at knowing that what I required was to be obtained, but that I couldn't get it at any price. The sample was some 3in. by 1in., and coloured a natural brown. I cut it in two, and it was the same colour right through the piece. I had perforce to oil my work, and it did very well, but would have looked 50 per cent. better if treated the same as the piece sent by the firm I mention, and I am still living in the hopes of some kind friend to amateurs instructing us in the mysteries.—JAMES COOPER.

STRANGE CO-TENANTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I send you a rather curious discovery, in the shape of an owl's nest with wild bees' comb built on to it. An old dead silver poplar, measuring 6ft. 6in. round base of bole, and standing 65ft., was felled here the other day. Some two or three minutes after it came down a brown owl flew out of a hollow branch near the top. The bark of the tree is exceptionally handsome, and it was decided, as the trunk was hollow for a good way up, to cut it into sections and use them as flower-stumps. In sawing through, 15ft. from the base, this nest, presumably an owl's, was found, with honeycomb attached, and a great many large slabs of old comb wedged into the space below, still smelling faintly of honey. In sawing through higher up, the trunk was seen to be solid, though rotten and perforated by small insect holes. Some 10ft. down from the top it was again hollow, and here, 8ft. down, another owl's nest was found. It would be interesting to know whether birds and bees were ever contemporaneous lodgers. As the lower nest completely filled up the "tube," and all the comb was beneath it, owls and insects must have had separate front doors, and thus it might well be that they were less conscious of each other's presence than the co-dwellers of a London flat! The trunk had many neat round holes about 3in. across all the way up, with frayed wood round the edges, as from the gnawing of tiny teeth; were these the work of bees or squirrels? If this discovery is considered sufficiently interesting for insertion in COUNTRY LIFE, I should be grateful for a confirmation, or correction, of the theory as to the nest being that of an owl. The second one was broken to pieces by the fall. How it was that the owl inmate was not killed by the impact is a marvel, for the trunk was crushed and split near the top whence the bird emerged.—LILIAN T. BAGNALL.

[We are obliged for the nest, which is that of an owl.—ED.]

A LOST PEREGRINE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On March 2nd I had the misfortune to lose a peregrine falcon, female of the first year, in a strong wind. She is very tame, moderately well trained, and has bell, jesses, and swivel attached. She was last seen flying east-north-east from Disley in Cheshire. It would be apparent to many that she is a tame bird, and I beg your permission to make my loss known to the readers of COUNTRY LIFE, feeling sure your excellent articles on falconry have insured a strong interest in the sport.—CHARLES F. BUTTERWORTH.

BEARING-REINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been much struck of late with the gratifying improvement that has taken place in London with regard to the bearing-rein. At a recent West End wedding the smartest horses had no bearing-reins at all, and I have noticed in the streets that a very large number of people now allow their animals to be comfortable. There are still too many tight abominations to be seen, but a decided movement has, I hope, set in, and coming up from the country I have been more struck by it, perhaps, than a Londoner. May this pleasant feature become still more marked.—COUNTRYMAN.

GULLS ASCENDING THE THAMES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wonder what is going to be the limit "up river" to which the now tame gulls of London will ascend and remain tame, and learn to come to be fed. Everyone knows how quickly water birds learn when and where they are safe. But as no shooting is allowed on the river so far as the Thames Conservancy has control, that is all in their favour. But until this year, though gulls have been steadily increasing on the reaches between Hammersmith Bridge and Kew Gardens, they have never been tame like the gulls lower down. They never came to be fed by hand, and would not even take what was thrown out for them, though large flocks fed daily in the market gardens opposite Barnes, with rooks, crows, starlings, and the green plover, which, I am glad to say, now come there every year. During the blizzard of Sunday, January 13th, the gulls all came flying over the narrow channel between Chiswick Eyot and the Middlesex bank, and with some peewits settled on the mud at low water. A quantity of food was thrown to them from the garden of this house, and ever since then they have come to be fed regularly. Sometimes from fifty to 100 will fly over the river to breakfast, but generally they prefer to wait till the tide is down, and to pick up the food which has sunk into the mud. Here they run about like coveys of white partridges. I would suggest that the same should be done at Barnes during the next bit of hard weather, and again at Richmond. I saw about thirty on the Penn Ponds only a few weeks ago.—C. J. CORNISH, Orford House, Chiswick Mall.

MOTH IN FUR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any of your correspondents tell me how I can treat a fur coat (without sending to furriers) which has signs of moth in it. On examining the fur I find in several places minute holes penetrating the skin, and in other places where small tufts of fur have combed out I discovered maggots and eggs, which I destroyed with application of benzene. Not knowing the habits of moth, I find it difficult to know what to do, and when, in order to exterminate the grub. I may say the coat has all the year been hanging up in a room. Is it the habit of the moth to penetrate the skin and lay its eggs behind, in which case the fur will have to be removed from the coat; or does it lay its eggs in the coat and remain there, in which case it could be destroyed without ruining the fur? I may mention that I took the coat to its makers, and they replied that the coat would have to be taken to pieces (cost £2 10s.), and have new collars and cuffs (cost £10). Good for trade, but bad for a poor soldier.—O. R. BRUSH.

[It is bad indeed; but we fear the makers are right. Prevention is the only cure in the case of moth.—ED.]

SEA-SAND MORTAR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of February 2nd, I noticed a query by "R. A. C." with reference to walls built with sea-sand mortar. The mitigation of the evils resulting from the use of such mortar is a most difficult matter, and, speaking generally, the only practical method of avoiding damp penetrating into the internal lining of the rooms is to completely batten the walls internally, covering the battens with laths or some such material as "expanded metal," afterwards rendering the lath work with Portland cement stucco. Care must be taken to provide efficient back ventilation between the wall surface and the inner face of the false work. Without further particulars as to the case in question it is impossible to decide in detail as to the most suitable form this false work should take. I should be happy to give "R. A. C." any further information in my power.—N. G. G.

DOG SHOWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The very sensible references which have appeared in your columns to the subject of the toilettes of show dogs are certain to meet with the approbation of everybody who cares for dogs for what they are and not for what art can make them. No doubt many judges pass over plucked dogs simply because they do not possess any practical knowledge of the breed they are judging; but under any circumstances the result is the same—disgust to owner. The case of the dandie, or shall I say dandies, at Cruft's Show is typical of others which might easily be instanced, and therefore to my mind fully justifies the question, Are dog shows really tending towards the improvement of dogs, or are they really run with the purpose of gratifying the vanity of some exhibitors and enabling others to add to their incomes by the sale of dogs? For my own part I do not consider that many breeds have improved during the past few years, though it is obvious that several have been so transformed in appearance as to be unrecognisable by anybody who has not visited dog shows during the period of their evolution. Take the fox-terrier and the bulldog—I select the first two varieties which come into my head—compare the past and present types, and ask yourself how many points of similarity there are between them. This is the result of alteration, not improvement, and it would be interesting to learn the reason for the change unless for one or other of the purposes I have mentioned above. Upon one point I feel positive, and that is that shows have not increased the utilitarian properties of dogs, or the robustness of their constitutions. Fancy the merits of a patent kennel being extolled on the ground that it contains an oil stove. What would a deer-stalker say if he saw a deerhound on a show bench with a rug over it? and what was the average mortality of puppies a score of years ago? The effects of in-breeding and a course of injudicious coddling must sooner or later enfeeble the constitutions and affect the intelligence of any animals, and dogs are not excepted; therefore when a man wants a dog with brains and strength he is not likely to seek for his requirements amongst the prize-winners of the day. Dog shows, moreover, have been directly responsible for the practical extinction of such good old breeds as the mastiff and black and tan terrier. Others could be mentioned in this category of moribund varieties, but I again prefer to stand on the first two which enter my mind. Were it not for the fact that dog shows are encouraging foreign breeds, some of which are clearly mongrels and owe what good qualities they possess to the skill of their English patrons, the old breeds would have been better patronised than they are. In short, in my opinion, and I believe that of many other sportsmen too, dog shows have entirely neglected their primary object, namely, the improvement of dogs, and are chiefly responsible for the influx of useless mongrels from all four quarters of the world.—A BELIEVER IN USEFUL DOGS.

THE BUILDING BYE-LAWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Reading your interesting correspondence on country bye-laws, I should like to give my views as an architect from a slightly different standpoint. The public has brought this nuisance on itself by encouraging the speculating builder, by a desire to live in a villa (which is larger than it can afford, and his to be built in a shoddy manner) rather than in a decent cottage. By desiring everything that is new and cheap and mean and showy and vulgar, and despising nearly everything that is humble and homely and craftsmanlike and hand-made. The owner has done the same, by building, without expert advice, either from his own ideas and fads or from the plans of his clerk of the works, who has neither the time nor the training to consider the constructional and architectural side of the question properly, until things arrived at such a pitch that the "police" had to step in—the "police" being the Local Government Board and their hand-cuffs the Building Bye-laws. Now, the Local Government Board had the difficult task of forming a set of Model Bye-laws. Who should they have asked for expert advice? The architects? Who were their representatives? The Royal Institute of British Architects? But the Local Government Board thought of the Royal Institute of British Architects as the general public does—"an institution for conferring the degree of A.R.I.B.A. on students who have passed an examination in archaeology and theory of building construction and surveying with no experience"—and they called in instead the engineer, the surveyor, the medical officer, the plumber, and the maimed, the halt, and the blind; and except so far as their craze for the use of fireproof materials in places where they are not particularly necessary, I think they did their job very well. Let me take a sample from your correspondent "L. G. D.," and endeavour to show that four of the objections out of eight are reasonable. (2) It is just as necessary to ventilate a sink drain as any other drain. (5) It is absurd to waste a good supply of washing water by putting it into a sham drain. (7) It is distinctly necessary that gardens of an adequate and defined size should be given, and if no dividing fences are shown, this regulation is not complied with. (1) It is the business of the person sending in the plans to point out where they are, and not to set the sanitary authority puzzles. Now I will turn to a brother "Architect." (1) Is it not possible to make part of a window open? Oh! brother, if you put forward such pleas as this I fear the public will think that all your objections are frauds, whereas you are indeed worthy of sympathy. Now for my own complaints. My local sanitary authority will not let me use timber framing on top story, covered with weather tiles or rough-cast. They will not let the top story overhang, nor let me put rooms in the roof, nor let me use thatch, all of which, I contend, are harmless in detached buildings, and conducive to a homely and picturesque effect. I suggest as a remedy that an architectural censorship should replace the bye-laws. To instance a case where

the bye-laws are not sufficiently severe. I have a piece of land covered with very fine fir trees, with a south-west aspect, eight acres in extent, in every way an excellent and desirable building site. Upon the edge thereof a brute has built eight semi-detached cottages or villas. They are square boxes of red brick, edged with white ditto, with purple slate roofs, and plate or some large-paned glass windows, and oaken grained doors. I daresay these horrors would pass any bye-laws under the sun. Yet my surveyor tells me that these abominable villas have depreciated my ground to the extent of 20 per cent., and to build as I had contemplated a decent house on my ground would be to court disaster, and I can tell you he is not an artistic person or faddist in any sense of the term.—ANOTHER ARCHITECT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The case against the Model Bye-laws is in many respects so strong, that it will be a great pity if it is spoilt by exaggeration or by unmerited abuse of local authorities, a course which some of your correspondents seem inclined to adopt. It should be borne in mind that in nine cases out of ten it is the Local Government Board that is to blame, and not the local authority; and it must be self-evident that if the support of District Councils is obtained in bringing pressure to bear on the authorities at headquarters—as it probably may be if the agitation is reasonably conducted—the prospects of success will be greatly increased. I am the chairman of a District Council which recently spent many months in revising its bye-laws, and in correspondence with the Local Government Board. In the district a large manufacturing firm are erecting for their employes a great number of most picturesque model cottages, many of which are half-timbered and many tile-hung. We proposed to alter our existing bye-laws by inserting new ones dealing with buildings erected in these styles, but the Local Government Board would only sanction these bye-laws in a form with which the cottages, though designed by eminent architects and of their kind almost perfect, do not comply. In vain we pointed out the strong arguments in favour of a modification for our district, and we have been compelled to put up with the unsuitable regulations. It is true that, being sensible men, we still permit the building of the cottages, but it is very unsatisfactory for the local authority to have to connive at breaking the law or else impede the carrying out of a splendid object-lesson in the artistic housing of the working classes.—L. B.

[Our correspondents do not exactly abuse local authorities, but only point out that those who compose them are placed in a false position when compelled to pronounce an opinion on a highly technical code of regulations. A butcher may be an excellent man in his way, and still not understand building and architecture.—ED.]

PLANTING NEAR A SMALL RIVER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have lately thrown a small strip of wood into the garden by pulling down part of the boundary wall, and shall be greatly obliged if you will give me some advice as to how to make it as attractive as possible. I am having holes prepared for suitable plants. It is bounded on two sides by a small river, and on the third by a ditch; this and the river usually overflow in winter, and in summer dry up almost together. The soil has never been dug, and is hard, like clay, and full of roots. The natural soil of the garden is very good. The trees are mostly hawthorns, but there are several beeches, a few oaks, and a little grove of wild cherry trees at one end. I should very much like to grow some lilies, Japan anemones, etc., and thought of digging good large holes 2ft. or 3ft. deep and filling these up during the summer with manure, refuse, and good soil. In one rather shady place there is a little mound; what could I plant to trail over it and hang down?—ROSE-BEETLE.

[For the chief planting we advise *Leucojum aestivum*, daffodils, and Solomon's seal; also hardy ferns, including hart's-tongue. Other plants likely to do well would be *Iris fetidissima*, the common columbine, and woodruff. Of lilies the most suitable would be the martagon and its white variety. For trailing over the mound, ivy, periwinkles, or moneywort. Ivy is charming with snowdrops coming through it. Snowdrops would also probably do well planted in quantity. If a large group is desired, *Polygonum Sieboldi* should be used, or if a group of flowering shrubs, guelder rose, or, still better, its original native form, the water elder (*Viburnum opulus*). In planting such a place, we think it well to maintain a different character to that of the garden by the use of plants that are either handsome natives or might be wild. Nearly all those named are of this nature. Two feet would be deep enough for the prepared holes, and we should not advise making the soil too rich.—ED.]

SWEET PEAS FOR EXHIBITION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be extremely obliged if you will kindly give me some information about the best way to grow sweet peas for exhibition at a show at the end of July.—B.

[We advise you to follow the treatment as given lately in COUNTRY LIFE. The plants will need much attention from the time of sowing the seeds until the flowers are gathered for exhibition. You must at once well prepare the ground—in fact, this should have been done during the winter—when deep trenching is necessary, and a good dressing of farmyard manure applied. After trenching the ground, leave it quite rough and lumpy, and about the end of March give it a good dressing of soot and wood ashes, and in the case of stiff land add old mortar rubble and road sand. Fork over the ground during the first week in April to the depth of about 9in., when all will be ready for receiving the plants. When the flowers are intended for exhibition, sowing of the seed must not be done in the open ground, but in pots. A suitable soil for sowing them in is two parts light loam, one part leaf soil, and one part old mushroom-bed manure, with a sufficient amount of road sand to keep it porous, adding a 6in. potful of bone meal to every three bushels of the mixture. Clean, moderately drained 3in. pots should be used, and the soil pressed in fairly firm till about three parts full, over which sow the seed, about seven peas to each pot, selecting good plump seed. We should plant out about the end of April, say the third week. It will be needful to give the plants close attention. Regulate the growths, and give an abundance of water in hot weather, with a gentle syringing on fine warm evenings. In showery weather give a sprinkling of some good artificial manure once in every ten days. Once a week, early in the morning, give a slight application of soot, which will give colour to the flowers and foliage, and when the plants are in full bloom diluted doses of farmyard manure will be required. Ten days before the date of the exhibition pick off every open flower, and never allow a single seed-vessel to form, as this at once hampers growth, and consequently the flowers are smaller. In the case of the sweet pea, as with

almost everything else, size counts heavily with the judges. In hot, bright weather shade with light canvas and thoroughly mulch the ground with long stable manure. Fresh, fully-developed spikes should be chosen with not less than three flowers on each. Place them in water immediately they are picked, and if possible convey them to the exhibition in water in suitable travelling cases. Whether in small or large collections, have each variety as distinct as possible, and each shade well represented. A well-known and successful sweet pea exhibitor writes: "I prefer neat green earthenware vases to anything else. Suitable foliage grasses or *Gypsophila paniculata* are generally allowed to be used, but frequently, in my opinion, they are employed too much, especially the *Gypsophila*. A simple and pleasing way is first to place sufficient very fine grass of a dark colour to form a groundwork for the flowers to rest upon, after which the spikes should be arranged as gracefully as possible, using one at a time. By so doing each individual bloom can be distinctly seen." We hope these notes will be useful to you, but you asked your question rather late.—ED.]

A REGIMENTAL PET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I hope you will think the enclosed photograph of sufficient interest to insert amongst your "Correspondence." It is that of a South African meer-cat, which corresponds somewhat to the Indian mongoose, hence his name, Rikki-Tikki. Meer-cats are usually very fierce and treacherous, even after being captive a long while, and however young they may be when taken. But Rikki, being born in captivity, was an exception to the rule. He was as tame and playful as a kitten, and used to purr and croon at one's feet to be taken up and stroked. He liked to be taken out for a walk, safely ensconced in one's pocket. The only thing he was afraid of was a large half-bred hound called Pom-pom; and to make him sit up like he is doing in the photograph, I got someone to imitate the bark of a dog by the side of the waggon. This immediately put him on the alert, and he assumed the position that wild meer-cats do when they scent coming danger. He belonged to the York and Lancaster Regiment, who used to be with me on this hill. Some wag once called him the officers' "Emergency Ration."—G. V. DAVIDSON, Capt. R.A., Wakkerstroom Hill, Transvaal, South Africa.



DOGS AS HOUSE-GUARDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see a correspondent writing to your paper to ask advice as to how he can obtain what you justly say to be scarcely attainable—a dog that shall be all sweetness and light to good people and yet a kind of "hoity terror" to the burglar and the like malefactors. Such a dog, as you intimate, is very nearly as difficult to find as the Greek Kalends. A dog must be either savage to all who are strangers, or more or less friendly with all. He may very probably be kind to friends and civil to strangers; but your correspondent asks more in the way of discrimination than this—he asks a dog to distinguish between the stranger who comes with burglarious intent and him who comes innocently; and such discrimination is virtually outside canine philosophy. Your dog may be wise; you must not expect him to be a wizard. But there is a further discrimination than this, in respect of dogs as house-guards, which too many people fail to make. There is the dog that is big and savage, to scare away tramps, and there is the dog that need not be either, to give the alarm in your house. In neither case need the dog be very big nor very savage. A barking Airedale terrier chained in the yard is generally enough to make the ordinary tramp go very delicately past the yard gate without entering. The bigger dogs, bull-mastiffs, etc., can do no more while on a chain; and a dog that will tear a man to bits is a pet of doubtful merits. But as against the burglar to his trade, the out-of-door dog, no matter how big, is virtually useless. By the device of appealing to the dog's gallantry, with the assistance of a canine friend of the opposite sex, or giving him a bit of drugged food, the biggest yard-dog may be rendered impotent. But if you have in your house, and tied up so that he cannot be enticed to door or window, where, through the keyhole or other orifice, the drugged food may be given him, a dog even of the smallest size—so long as he will bark at the entry, or attempted entry, of a stranger—will hardly fail to give an alarm that will put the household on the alert and the would-be burglar to flight. Perhaps the smaller dogs—the breed really does not matter—are the better. They are apt to be quicker of ear and readier of bark, and the smallest dog thus tied within the house is a more useful guard than the biggest, whether chained or loose, outside. If people would thus discriminate between the yard-dog of ferocious aspect to scare the tramp and the indoor dog, possibly of the meekest aspect, to give alarm if a nocturnal entry be attempted, we should have fewer visits from tramps and burglars.—H. S.